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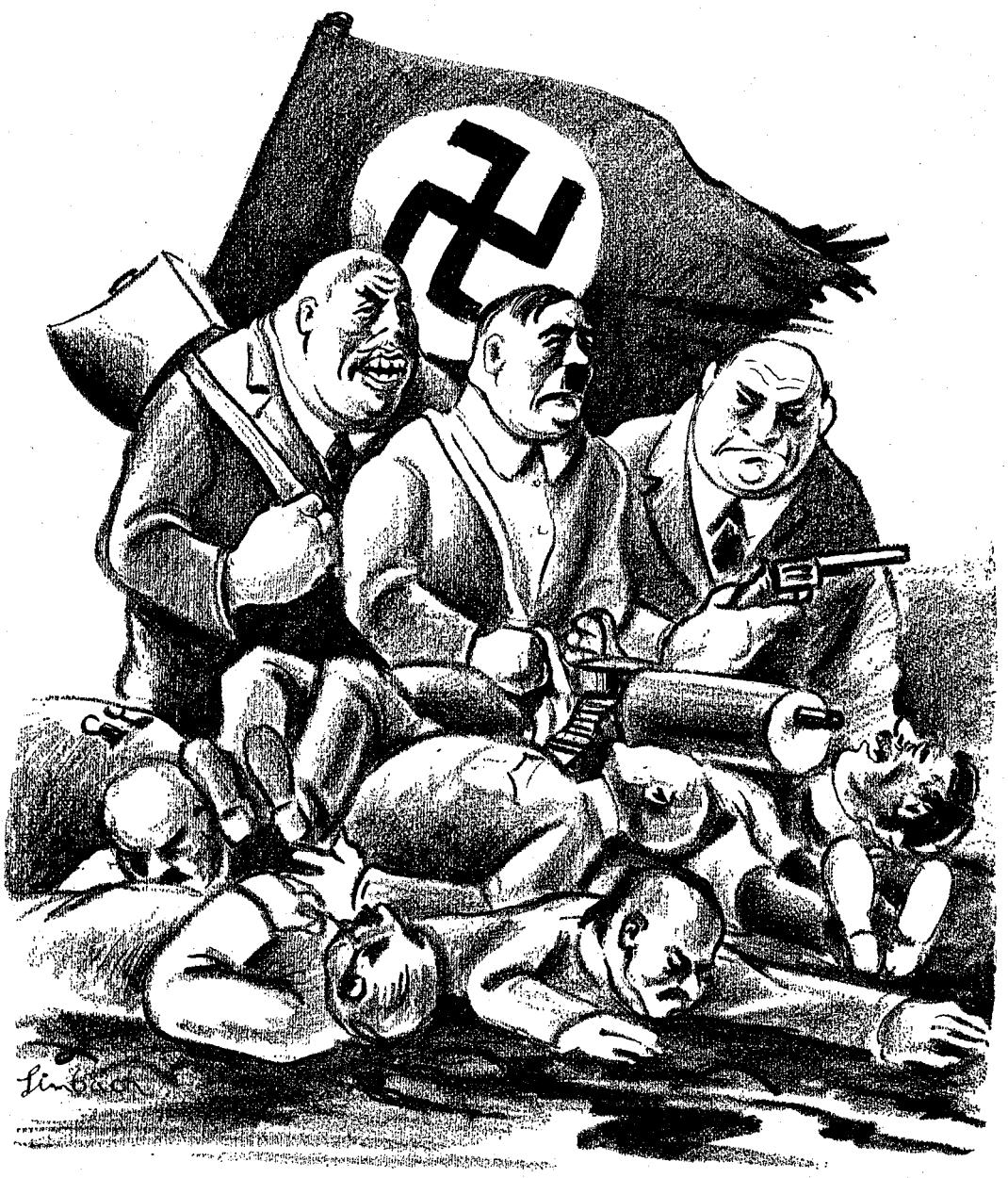
new Masses

JULY 10, 1934

THE Nazis are at bay. Hitler in his desperate effort to maintain himself in power against the rising wave of discontent in his own ranks is immersing Germany in blood. Twenty-four Nazi leaders, some of them the most intimate collaborators of Der Fuehrer, have been slain. Reports, apparently true, though vehemently denied by the official Nazi agencies, place the number of minor Nazi chieftains murdered at Hitler's behest close to two hundred. As late as Monday morning, residents of Lichterfelde, a suburb in Berlin, reported hearing the volleys of firing squads in the old military cadet school in their town. The number of executions is still uncertain. Roehm, Minister without portfolio and Chief of Staff of the Storm Troops, Hitler's closest friend for many years, is gone. So are Heines, Count Helldorf, Karl Ernst, Gregor Strasser, General von Schleicher and his wife, two of Von Papen's aides, Dr. Ehrich Klausner, and many others.



Limbach

THE ostensible reason for this blood bath is a conspiracy on the part of a clique of Storm Troop leaders to overthrow Hitler and to organize a government that would carry out some of the "socialist" promises contained in the Nazi program. The immediate cause was the conflict between the Storm Troops and the Stahlhelm. Rumors had spread among the Storm Troops that Hitler, as a result of his last week's conference with his capitalist masters in Hessin, was planning their reorganization and their drastic numerical reduction, that his orientation was shifting to the rival Stahlhelm, and that he was determined to put an end to all that piffle about a second revolution. It had been announced that July would be a month of vacation for the Storm Troops. The leaders suspected that the "vacation" was the first step toward their reorganization. They objected. They began to demand that the Stahlhelm be disbanded. When their cause seemed pretty much lost, they had resolved, according to the official Hitler version, to start an insurrection. Informed by his secret police, Hitler struck at his enemies. In the process, he decided to eliminate some other people who had no direct connection with the conspirators, but who had been a thorn in his side for some time, such as Klausner, von Schleicher, von Papen, Hindenburg's favorite. Rumors continue that Hindenburg and Hitler have split.

WITHOUT the guidance of the Communist analysis of the German situation, one is bound to feel bewildered. The liberals, the social-democrats, the Trotskyites kept on babbling about a prolonged period of Fascism. They persisted in spinning theories about capitalism having settled into a period of reaction. They maintained that the German working-class was so hopelessly shattered that it would need years to recoup its forces. As regards Hitler, their "analysis" led them to the assertion that Hitlerism represented the petty bourgeoisie, the peasantry, the lumpen proletariat. Germany, according to them, was now under the dictatorship of the petty bourgeoisie. The Communist International had an entirely different view of the matter. Hitler, said the International, is the tool of monopoly capital. He is the lackey of Krupp, Thyssen, and other industrial and financial magnates who have been financing him. Hitler's ascendancy has been due not to any fundamental rift between the proletariat and the ruined sections of the petty bourgeoisie, but to the desperation of the great industrialists in face of the rising wave of popular discontent. His demagogical gifts have simply been utilized by monopoly capital to divert the attention of the masses from their immediate problems by raising the absurd slogans of Aryanism, anti-Semitism, equality of armaments and similar slogans that had in the final analysis nothing to do with the more basic demands of the impoverished masses. His task was to smash the labor organizations, the revolutionary parties, and then crush every bit of resistance in the German working-class. All for the benefit of monopoly capital. Now the analysis of the Communist In-

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ternational has found incontrovertible confirmation. Now even the bourgeois press admits Hitler's intimate connection with monopoly capital.

THE Communists have consistently maintained that the Storm Troops were not a homogeneous body, that they comprised a variety of elements with a variety of different and often conflicting interests, that in the course of time the majority of the Storm Troops would realize the criminality and sterility of Hitler's program, and that disillusioned, they would seek another, a more fundamental, a revolutionary way out of the economic and political abyss into which monopoly capital has hurled the German masses. Throughout this period the Communist Party of Germany carried on a tireless underground campaign of organization, anti-Nazi agitation, and exposure of Hitler and Hitlerism. The results are well known. Industrial strikes have been breaking out through the country. In the factories, the workers forcefully demonstrated their disdain during the recent elections of the "Confidence Councils" when only twenty per-cent of the votes were cast for the Nazi candidates. This general ferment became manifest among the Storm Troops which had within one year and a half swollen to three million. Within recent months there have been numerous local uprisings among the Storm Troops. Thousands of former enthusiastic followers of Hitler had to be sent to concentration camps. Thus it came about that the mainstay of the Hitler regime began to disintegrate. The bourgeoisie was alarmed. There is a distinct danger in indulging the masses with leftist phrases too long. The masses may begin to clamor for the fulfillment of promises. This, indeed, was what actually happened. The Storm Troops became a terrible menace to the whole elaborate structure so carefully erected by the capitalists and their Nazi servants. The danger became even greater, when, owing to the Nazis' stupid foreign policies, Germany became isolated both politically and economically. German exports began to decline rapidly, dragging down with them the Reichsbank's gold reserve. With the structure toppling around their ears, with the masses in a state of fermentation, with the Storm Troops ready to rebel, something had to be done and done quickly to stave off as long as possible the inevitable collapse. Hence the events of the last few days. Needless to say, these efforts of Der Fuehrer will prove futile: Nothing has been solved. Not one of the basic contradictions has been removed. The cold-blooded brutality of Hitler and Goering have generated so much resentment in so many different quarters that another series of explosions leading to the final collapse and the seizure of power by the proletariat is as certain as the sun's rising tomorrow.

ONCE more the Alabama Supreme Court has upheld the death sentence for the Scottsboro boys, naming August 31 as the execution day for Haywood Patterson and Clarence Norris. Hearing the Norris appeal only, the Court refused any reconsideration of the Patterson case on the grounds of a trumped-up technicality insisted on by Attorney General Knight—that the appeal was not filed within the period allotted by law. Ignoring the testimony of Ruby Bates which has conclusively exposed the frame-up, and taking no cognizance of Judge Horton's admission that evidence overwhelmingly favors the defendants, the Alabama Supreme Court calmly announced: "We find no error to reverse." Four times before, Alabama justice has mouthed these words—and each time its drive to murder the Scottsboro boys has been defeated by world-wide mass protests led by the International Labor Defense. This same I.L.D. last week snatched from the electric chair James Victory, Detroit Negro, framed on the charge of "attacking a white woman." It also forced the Georgia courts to set bail for Angelo Herndon, heroic young Negro organizer who has been sentenced to 20 years. Unless, however, $15,000 cash bail is raised within the next few weeks he will be shackled to a Georgia chain gang: for revolutionaries, a death-sentence. The I.L.D. address is 80 E. 11 St., N. Y. C.

THE traction strike in Milwaukee the past week served a double function: first, it evidenced to the nation what sterling militancy and cooperation is possible between strikers and their fellow proletarians, 100,000 of whom supported the several thousand on strike; and second, the workings of a Socialist city. It required a strike in a Socialist city to develop the latest diabolic murder device against strikers: concealed high-charged wires, which resulted in the death of 24 year old Eugene Domagalski, and critical injuries to 21 year old Stanley Polinski. This development occurred when the strikers swarmed along the banks of Lake Michigan to the Lakeside Power Plant—key center of the strike. The following day the Socialist paper, the Milwaukee Leader, carried an editorial titled, "The Company Must Recede." A few phrases: " . . . inconveniences to which the city has been put, and the loss of business which the city merchants may suffer, will be incalculable." (Domagalski was killed the evening before.) The editorial continued, "As utility corporations go Milwaukee has found its electric company ordinarily *far fairer* than the average. There has been . . . a *friendlier relation* between the local corporate utility and the public than is often the case in many another American metropolis." Disregarding this friendlier relation the workers returned to the power plant and pulled out the remaining 120 men. The company quickly came to terms. The strikers won partial victories: reinstatement of discharged men, provisions for collective bargaining, etc.

UPTON SINCLAIR'S latest circular letter is accompanied by an appeal, signed by 18 prominent persons, for support of his campaign for Governor of California and his EPIC plan. Sinclair, you know, is going to end poverty in California (why not elsewhere too?) by a system of self-help producers and consumers cooperatives that will relieve all distress. At the same time, the Pen and Hammer of Los Angeles reports certain facts about the 110 such groups which were formed in California during 1932 and 1933, and which at one time, included 250,000 persons. 40 cooperatives had no meat; 77 no fish; 19 no bread; 46 no staples. 67 had a little (2 ounces per month per person!) meat; only one had enough staples. Such is California self-help! Does Sinclair mean to end poverty by spreading systematic starvation? Among the signers are Stuart Chase, Dreiser, Darrow, and Archibald MacLeish. What strikes one immediately is the fact that here are supposedly well-informed students of the American scene; and yet all their study and observation leads them to this absurd Utopia of Epic-ism. One of the basic causes for their blindness, in addition to their middle-class desire to save as much as possible without revolution, is their ignorance of theory. It is always being borne in upon us that without clear theoretical understanding no really intelligent (and that means revolutionary) action is possible.

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IN his intimate one-way conversation with the American people on the first anniversary of the birth of the Blue Eagle, Roosevelt made it quite plain that "We (the administration) seek the security of the men, women and children of the nation. . . . Relief was, and continues to be, our first consideration." The following day, to the proper accompaniment of the drums of ballyhoo, he announced the creation of a high-sounding "President's Committee on Social Security." In glowing colors, he painted his plans for the nation's future, which occasioned the Dallas News to burst into this flood of Miltonian lyricism:

> President Roosevelt has a social vision of a nation in which poverty, hunger and useless suffering are to be eliminated. He desires to see the lot of the slum dweller better and the tenant-farmer, laboring under serf conditions, made into a free man enjoying the comforts of a civilized home. He hopes that the aged poor will be humanely cared for and health made possible to those now worn down by unnecessary illnesses. He dreams of a people made happy and prosperous through wise legislation.

In the more prosaic terminology of the President's unlamented predecessor, we find the old "chicken in every pot, a car in every garage" come back to plague us once more.

BUT Dr. Roosevelt *has* a program, which, it must be admitted, constitutes "long time planning"—calculated, if put into effect, to take us back at least five hundred years to the good old days of feudalism. Stripped of its grandiose verbiage, the administration's proposed relief program represents a mad, disordered retreat into dark-age economy. It involves the scrapping of productive processes which took centuries to perfect, together with most of those real advances in civilization which, if applied to a production-for-use economy, would serve as the bases for undreamed-of levels of culture. It has a "permanent" feature, *i. e.,* the placing of a greatly-reduced standard of living for the masses of workers on a permanent basis. A major point in the program is active encouragement and sponsorship of a "back-to-the-land" movement on a huge scale. (This is precisely the crux of the unemployment program in Nazi Germany.) Briefly, it consists of the decentralization of industry, the erection of self-contained communities (in the best feudal tradition) centering around small industries, with subsistence homesteads providing only the barest of necessities. Acording to Federal Relief Administrator Hopkins, it is planned "to move the industrial unemployed from cities out into the country where they can live partly from the land and partly from work in small industrial plants." In other words, a return to the primitive. The New York Post (in an editorial championing the fallacious policy of "monetary reform" as the solution to the economic crisis!) correctly points out that: "In the South today there are examples of this sort of life. Small towns where people 'live off the land' and work part-time for starvation wages." Hopkins accurately refers to the administration plan as being along the lines of the "Ford Plan," that infamous scheme worked out in 1932 by Ford's indefatigable efficiency experts. whereby workers were to be forced to cultivate subsistence gardens, so that Ford could dole out starvation wages to them while they worked, and then send them back to their miserable patches during unemployment periods, thus assuring himself of a steady labor supply at less than subsistence wages!

HOW will the government-sponsored back-to-the-land movement effect the farmer? It's quite confusing: first, the government tells the farmer he's producing too much; it orders wholesale destruction of farm products; it pays plantation owners for what they haven't planted; it forces agricultural workers to seek employment in the cities, thus swelling the ranks of urban unemployed; then it proposes to send unemployed industrial workers to the country to produce the very crops it has forbidden to farmers! Amusing (and revealing) confirmation of this aspect of the inner contradictions within capitalism's executive committee is afforded by a recent declaration of Brain Truster Tugwell: "Even for the present, the movement back to the farm may be merely transforming an urban relief problem into an acute relief problem. In such rural states as Oklahoma and South Dakota, for example, 27 and 22 percent, respectively, of the state's population, are on relief rolls." But is the Federal Relief Administrator nonplussed by this statement from the administration's own ranks? Not at all. Resourceful Harry has another plan up his sleeve for the relief of rural populations. "There are around 600,000 farm families on our relief rolls," he said shortly before the devastating drought added at least that many more. "I don't believe that these families are going to acquire an independent economy by working on the land. In short, the administration's ingenious solution

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STANLEY BURNSHAW, MICHAEL GOLD, GRANVILLE HICKS, JOSHUA KUNITZ, HERMAN MICHELSON, JOSEPH NORTH, ASHLEY PETTIS, WILLIAM RANDORF.
WILLIAM BROWDER, *Business Manager*

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for unemployment problems is to bring the farm to industry, and industry to the farm!"

TO illustrate the crazy contradictions inherent in the administration's "permanent" program for unemployment relief and social security, we may cite a couple of concrete examples. Not many months ago, the A.A.A. ordered the wholesale slaughter of tens of thousands of cattle in order to cut down the "surplus." (Surplus. Do you hear, you starving millions?) The plans of the A.A.A. were actively abetted by an act of God in the form of the drought. Providence itself was smiling on the scheme. In Arkansas, unemployed workers were being herded into farm colonies by the State Relief Administration. What should be raised in these farm colonies? The relief officials in Arkansas cast longing eyes on the cattle being killed in the Dakotas up north. "Why kill those cattle?" they asked the government. "Why not send them down here for our employed in the farm colonies?" The government complied, so now the Federal Emergency Relief Administration has Arkansas relief workers raising cattle "surpluses" while paying farmers elsewhere to destroy the same! In Amarillo, Texas, a fine cannery—one of many built throughout the country as work-relief projects to process surplus cattle—has just started operations, manned by relief workers. Many of these are former cow punchers who were employed on Texas ranches in pre-surplus days. Today, they find themselves in the position of canning the cattle they used to breed, while expensively-equipped canneries the country over have been closed down due to "over-production." And when these relief-workers have finally killed off and canned the surplus, we presume they will be sent back to the ranches to raise further surpluses! (Page Ilya Ehrenbourg. Here, too, they are all madmen!) The pursuit of these paradoxes around the vicious circle of capitalist planning might be carried on ad infinitum. A grand feudal reshuffling of industry and agriculture, this New Deal of ours. What becomes of the much-vaunted contributions of capitalism to the progress of civilization—mass production methods, division of labor, and other features of our machine age? Echo answers, what? And in the Soviet Union, the workers smile knowingly as they continue their onward march toward the completion of the second five-year plan and the greatest culture conceived of by man.

The Week's Papers

WEDNESDAY—A. W. Harriman, whose law violations cost bank $5,000,000 to $7,000,000, gets four and a half year sentence and will appeal. . . . Two Moscow subway grafters, convicted of selling nails, sheetmetal, etc., sentenced to be shot. . . . Jersey City drive to crush picketing in furniture workers' lockout continues. Corliss Lamont is 16th picket to be arrested. . . . Roosevelt authorizes 50,000 more recruits for C.C.C. camps. . . . Milwaukee cops club strikers. . . . Earl Browder addresses sharp questions to Norman Thomas on role of Socialist Party in Milwaukee strike. . . . Socialist Mayor MacLevy of Bridgeport calls unemployed "chiselers."

Thursday—Alabama Supreme Court upholds conviction of two Scottsboro boys, sets execution for Aug. 31. I.L.D. starts drive for more funds, to carry case to Washington. . . . Darrow review board again attacks N.R.A. . . . Roosevelt sets up steel labor board. . . . R. W. Child, former minister to Italy and favorite of Mussolini, returns, seeing no signs of war in Europe. . . . U. S. exports fell nineteen million dollars in May, imports rose eight millions, cutting favorable trade balance to $5,560,000. . . . Harley, former Jersey judge, convicted by State Senate of paying $15,000 to politician McCutcheon for his job; same tribunal having previously unanimously acquitted McCutcheon of having received the bribe. . . . 61 jailed in Milwaukee for picketing. . . . Mother Bloor, 73-year-old working-class leader, after 10 days in jail, collapses in Loup City, Neb. court, at her trial for "inciting to riot."

Friday—Harriman denied plea for bail, ordered to jail July 9. . . . 13 Michigan bankers indicted for false reports. . . . Something new by Kipling leaks out (by cable) and makes the first page. . . . Waldorf-Astoria reported financially embarrassed, nearly two and a half years behind in its rent. . . . Gov. Langer of North Dakota sentenced to 18 months and $10,000 fine for defrauding government. . . . Leon Henderson, N.R.A. economic adviser, reports there is no basis for raising wages generally in textile industry. . . . First picket killed in "Socialist" Milwaukee. . . . Contracts are let for $7,000,000 army planes and trucks. . . . American League Against War and Fascism calls second U. S. Congress Against War, to be held in Chicago September 28-29-30.

Saturday—General Johnson, snapping at an unsigned circular letter to Ford dealers, announces Ford will line up with N.R.A. All Ford has to do now, he says, is sign the letter. . . . National head of American Legion lectures churches on their laxity in red-baiting. . . . "Putzy" Hanfstaengl, debarred by distance from taking part in Hitler's blood feast, consoles himself as an honored guest at the Astor-French wedding in Newport.

Sunday—Roosevelt leaves on month's cruise. . . . Franz Hollering, former Berlin editor, arrives here predicting a Communist revolution in Germany within a few months. . . . Welfare Commissioner Hodson of New York, who got cops to club relief demonstrators, appoints committee of 500 petty bourgeois to advise him how to spend city's relief money. City now has 310,000 families on whom to spend $18,000,000 a month.

Monday—Joint Legislative Committee struggles with problem of 260,000 New York State investors in "guaranteed" (pre-crisis) mortgages, who can't get their money and want state to pay them. . . . Zionist Convention urged to apply blessings of N.R.A. to Palestine. . . . Donald Richberg left more or less in charge (called "Assistant President" by some) as Roosevelt's cruiser steams South. . . . Jim Crow rules on Chicago beach smashed by League of Struggle for Negro Rights. . . .American Inquiry Commission into Nazi regime starts sessions in New York with first-hand testimony by victims of Hitler. Clarence Darrow presides.

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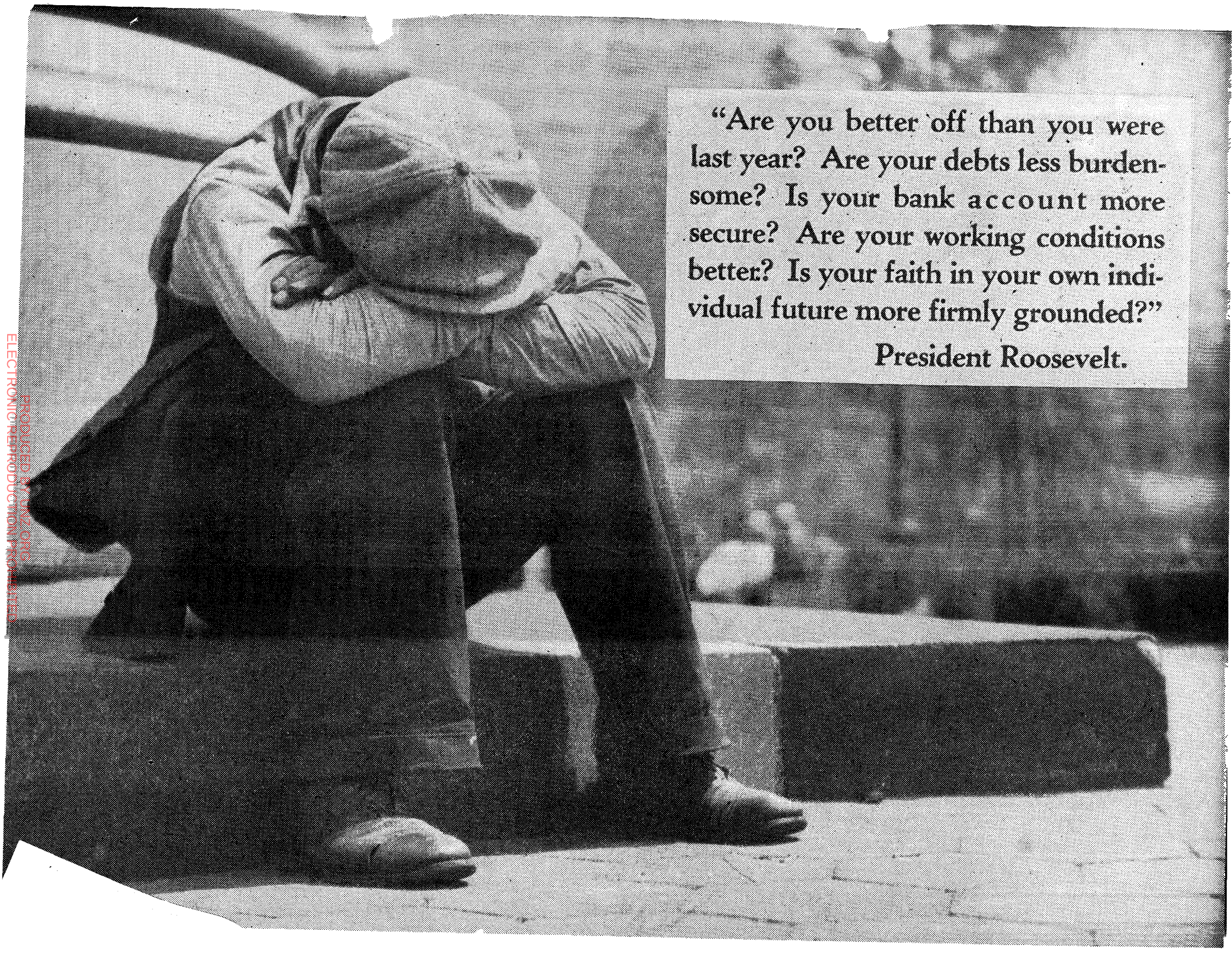

"Are you better off than you were last year? Are your debts less burdensome? Is your bank account more secure? Are your working conditions better? Is your faith in your own individual future more firmly grounded?"

President Roosevelt.

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Decay of the Socialist Party

PAUL NOVICK

Since the national convention of the Socialist Party in Detroit, last month, there have been important developments in the party. Among these was the formation of a Committee for the Preservation of the Socialist Party. Its purpose was to oppose final ratification by the membership nationally of the Declaration of Principles adopted by the majority at the Detroit convention. Supporting the Detroit Declaration of Principles (a "leftist" stand) were Norman Thomas, Mayor Daniel Hoan, of Milwaukee, and Leo Krzycki, of the A.F. of L. Opposed, were Louis Waldman, Charles Solomon, former Judge Panken, the "Old Guard" carrying on the policies of the late Morris Hillquit. The Jewish Daily Forward contributed heavily to the fund of the Committee for the Preservation of the Socialist Party. At the New York State convention, held the past week, Thomas suffered a decided setback, despite his nomination for the Senate —a "harmony" move. All candidates and resolutions that he was regarded as favoring were defeated by an average vote of two to one. Leading his opponents was Louis Waldman, state chairman. Waldman's thesis, endorsed by the state convention and condemning the Detroit Declaration, boiled down to this:

1: The party must disclaim any attempt to set up a "working-class dictatorship."

2: It must repudiate any pledge that would bind the party to support any member who committed an illegal act in resisting war.

3: It must declare against the policy of "massed resistance" to war—must repudiate this phrase as having no place in its principles.

4: It must declare against any seizure of power by the Socialist Party through other than "legal" means.

Thomas replied to these arguments that he was willing to arrange for verbal changes to meet the objections raised, before the document—the Declaration of Principles—is submitted to a scheduled national referendum of the party. He even was willing, he said, to permit a resolution modifying the "disputed" parts of the declaration. Under these circumstances he received the nomination for United States Senator. Thus "harmony" was achieved in New York. Even the spurious revolutionism of Detroit favored by the shrewder demagogue, Thomas, was too much for the Old Guard. Waldman stated he was opposed to the Declaration because "it makes us less effective." His peroration was: "I will try to make the party the kind of party I think it ought to be." The following article describes the kind of party it is.—THE EDITORS.

THE GENERAL confusion of bourgeois society with its sharpened nationalism, the confusion prevailing among the petty bourgeois reformist elements, as well as the pressure of the rank and file for a revolutionary program, were reflected in the sixteenth convention of the Socialist Party held June 1-3 in Detroit. The convention was a spectacle of political decomposition.

The official organ of the Socialist Party, the New Leader, testifies to the fact that there were six different factions among the 150 odd delegates assembled in Detroit. It was obvious, however, that each faction was itself divided on most questions so that not one of them represented a unit on any basic problem.

Disregarding the various subdivisions and streamlets the lines were roughly drawn as follows:

1. The "Old Guard" (or the Hillquitites, or the diehards). Out and out reactionaries who work hand in hand with Green and Woll, directly, or through the officials of the American Federation of Labor connected with the machinery of the N.R.A., trusted servants of Roosevelt and the various city heads like LaGuardia in New York. This group is best represented by one of the biggest (and the most prosperous) daily organ of the Second International, The New York Jewish Daily Forward and its $20,000 a year editor, Abraham Cahan, who at a mass meeting of the New York dressmakers in October, 1933, at Madison Square Garden declared that Roosevelt could become a full-fledged member of the Socialist Party. This organ expresses the views of the old guard on the Soviet Union through its vicious crusade, which by far exceeds the anti-Soviet attacks of the Hearst press or any other bourgeois newspaper in the United States.*

2. The Norman Thomas group, which is essentially the same as the Old Guard, but differs as to methods and—mainly—language. This group realizes that the *open* reactionary methods and language of the former, the white guardist rowdyism of the Forward, the corruption and racketeering of "Socialist" officials in the A.F. of L. unions, exposes the Socialist Party's true character before the masses. The Thomas group stands for a more "gentlemanly" attitude towards—and sometimes expresses "interest" in—the Soviet "experiment." Again, essentially there is little difference between the Thomas group and the old guard as exemplified by Thomas' "original" stand on the N.R.A. and by his liberal-reformist attitude generally.

3. The group led by Professor Maynard Krueger and the other S.P. majority delegates to the Paris International Socialist Conference in August, 1933. (There, they were part of a minority of 18, whereas the two S.P. minority delegates were part of the huge mapority of 291.) This group devotes most of its attention to international matters, which is an indication of the resentment of the rank and file Socialists against the treacheries of the German Social Democracy. Very conveniently, however, Krueger and the others are much less engaged in criticizing Roosevelt than Otto Wels, and are still less bothered with the treacheries of Messrs. Green and Woll, Lewis and Hillman. Like the Thomas group, it yields to the pressure of the rank and file by using phrases about working class unity—expelling from the party, however, those elements who in deeds stand for unity, as the Krueger machine did in Chicago.

4. The "Revolutionary Policy Committee" which in its "Appeal to the Membership of the S.P." issued *before* the convention went to the extent of actually mentioning "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," and called to the defense of the U.S.S.R., "land of proletarian dictatorship" where ("there only") the workers are in power "constructing a socialist society." We shall presently see how this group toned down at the convention, tamely swallowing reactionary action and a counter-revolutionary attack on the Soviet Union.

5. The National Socialists of the openly fascist brand. This element exposed itself in the speeches of Joseph W. Sharts, Ohio state-chairman of the S.P., and Daniel W. Hoan, notwithstanding the support the latter gave to the "revolutionary" Declaration of Principles. The sharpened nationalism and the war preparations of the bourgeoisie which is already dividing the parties of the Second International along national lines was another cause for division within the ranks of the American S.P. just as it is occurring within all parties of the Second International.

6. The Milwaukee and other delegates. Whether because of its municipal "socialism," or because its "socialism" expresses itself in a pacifism reminiscent of its pro-Germanism during the World War, this group was a faction by itself. The pacifism of this group will explain why Hoan, mayor of Milwaukee, whose police are splitting the heads of the unemployed and of anti-Hitler demonstrators, switched over to the "left" during the debate on the Declaration, whereas two days before he fought and voted against the "left" report of group No. 3 on the Paris conference.

This rough outline can give some idea of the composition and decomposition of the S.P. convention and the S.P. itself. In the words of one of its "theoreticisms," the "leftist" Haim Kantorovitch:

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* Incidentally, the Forward bought the rights to reprint T. Tshernavina's counter revolutionary book *Escape From The Soviets*, the first instalment of which appeared immediately after the Convention.

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> In the Socialist Party, as constituted now, there are people who really belong to the bourgeois liberals and people who in fact should belong to the Communist Party. At the very same meeting [of the S. P.] one proclaims Russia as the hope of the world, another—as a fortress of world reaction; that socialism without Dictatorship of the Proletariat is unthinkable, and that Dictatorship, even proletarian, is a calamity for socialism; that the American Federation of Labor is a fascist organization and that the A.F. of L. is the most progressive organization in the world. *

This is an ample, though crude, estimate of the political degeneracy of the S.P. In Detroit this degeneracy came sharply to the fore. At the end, some of the conflicting factions united, producing the "revolutionary" Declaration of Principles, a synthesis of reactionary policy and leftist phrases. Whatever else the convention did, however, was out and out reactionary. In their division of labor the various wings of the convention followed in the main the course of the multitude of wings in the various parties of the second international, as aptly formulated by V. Knorin in his speech before the 13th Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International:

> Every social-democratic party contains various factions which reflect the ideological collapse of social democracy but it is the rights who act. They are openly coming to Fascism, openly harnessing themselves to the chariot of nationalism. The "lefts" remain passive and *can only chatter* holding back the masses from going over to Communism. The "rights" act and organize; the "lefts" write "left" resolutions.* *

The Detroit convention truly reflected the general collapse of social-democracy, the collapse of the entire Second International. The American Socialist Party, though it was always among the more unprincipled and loose parties of that "International," is this time in the same boat, let us say, with the Socialist Party of France, which at its recent convention held in Toulouse at the end of May, was divided into *eight* factions, with eight different resolutions on the most important issues . . . The spectacle at Toulouse prompted one of its delegates (De-Philipon) to cry out in despair: "A party which wants to organize the means of production and distribution ought to at least be able to organize its own collective activity."

But it could not, just as the bourgeoisie with whom it is connected cannot organize the means of production. What is true of the French S.P., which still has some proletarian following, is still more true of the American Socialist Party which has no broad proletarian basis. The important role the petty-bourgeois elements are playing in the S.P. was sharply demonstrated in Detroit. The "lawyers' brigade" was the leading spirit on the right, while the professors and "young clergymen" (in the terms of the Forward) were at the head of the "left," with a mass of A.F. of L. and S.P. bureaucrats, Forward agents and various professionals in between. There were but two Negroes at the convention.

2. "IF" and "NOT NOW"

One must feel that it would be an insult to compare such elements with the fearless rank and file fighters from all fronts of the class struggles, the workers and farmers, the Negro miners and share-croppers, who constituted the voting strength of the Eighth Communist Party convention at Cleveland in April. In addition, one can scarcely draw a step-by-step comparison of the proceedings of the two conventions. There was no report at Detroit, exhaustive or otherwise, no analysis of the present general situation of capitalist society, of the class struggle, of Fascism, of the role of the labor movement, of the Soviet Union. Nothing! There was a most shallow "keynote speech" by Leo Krzycki, of Milwaukee national chairman of the S.P., wherein it was declared that "the country has passed through a year of novel experiments" and that "the attitude of large masses of workers towards the New Deal is changing." Krzycki was "proud to say" that the S.P. recognized "from the first that the N.R.A. was a class instrument for the purpose of repairing and preserving capitalism." Here he completely lost his memory, forgetting about the statements by Norman Thomas that the "labor clauses of the [N.R.A.] bill as introduced into Congress rightly used will give the workers an enormously powerful weapon for progress toward genuine socialism (New Leader, June 10, 1933—My emphasis, P.N.); or the super-patriotic N.R.A. ballyhoo of his (Krzycki's) Milwaukee Leader, as well as of the Forward; or the collaboration of socialists in the N.R.A. apparatus, or the doings of his own colleague, Hillman, member of Roosevelt's National Labor Board and Industrial Labor Advisory Board against whom the valiant chairman of the S.P., Krzycki, vice-president of the Hillman controlled Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union, never uttered a sound . . . This did not prevent him from expressing his pious resentment against those European Socialists who considered "holding of office more important" that "building educational propaganda machines"! At the end of this insipid and hypocritical "keynote" came a quotation from one of the most reactionary bourgeois servants, Grover Cleveland, to the effect that "it is a condition, not a theory, which confronts us."

Typical petty-bourgeois fear of a theoretical analysis of conditions! There was fear of further exposing the decomposition of the S.P., fear of exposing its reactionary character. The convention could not, however, avoid a discussion on the report of the Paris conference and on the Declaration of Principles introduced by the "left" wing. There is too much pressure from below. The rank and file membership is in a state of ferment. There is a demand for revolutionary action. The convention could not help but try to "pacify the revolutionary appetite," as Louis Waldman, leader of the old guard, so brutally expressed it in the Forward of June 5.

The "left" report of the majority of the S.P. delegation to Paris (Krueger, Felix, Levenson, Senior) was rejected by a vote of 8,344 to 7,831, while the minority report by Panken was not even considered for adoption. No report was adopted. No stand was taken on affairs in Germany, on Fascism in general, on Democracy and Dictatorship, on the danger of attack on the Soviet Union. The convention both could not make up its mind and was afraid to commit itself. These in turn are some of the reasons why the Declaration of Principles which was adopted is so muddled and so generously studded with "ifs" at strategic points.

The Declaration contains no survey, no analysis. After a few meaningless and hackneyed paragraphs about "the privileged minority" and socialization of industry, the Declaration, without even as much as *mentioning* the present forces making for the coming imperialist war, launches into an obscure statement against war, the pacifist character of which cannot be hidden by such phrases as "massed war resistance," or "a united effort" "to convert the capitalist war crisis into a victory for socialism."

The Declaration does not say how. It does not say anything about "defensive" imperialist wars. It does not mention *anywhere* U.S. imperialism. There is nothing about class war, civil war. What a far cry this "revolutionary" declaration is from the resolution the Socialist Party, under pressure of the then left wing led by Charles E. Ruthenberg, adopted at the St. Louis convention, in 1917. That resolution stated:

> The only struggle which would justify the workers in taking up arms is the great struggle of the working class of the world to free itself from economic exploitation and political oppression, and we particularly warn the workers against the snare and delusion of so-called defensive warfare.

The anti-war paragraph of the Declaration is a jumble of phrases torn out of the St. Louis resolution, qualifying its "strongest" slogan of "massed war resistance" as follows:

> They (the Socialists) will meet war and the detailed plans for war already mapped out by the war-making arms of the government by massed war resistance, organized *so far as practicable* in a general strike of labor unions and professional groups in a united effort to make the waging of war a practical impossibility and to convert the capitalist war crisis into a victory for socialism. (My emphasis.)

This is a step back from the resolutions adopted by the Second International at its special congress in Basle, in 1912. The Socialist leadership betrayed the Basle resolution with its *direct* call for a general strike just as the S.P. leadership here betrayed the St. Louis resolution. It seems as if the "lefts" in Detroit had *this* in mind and, to make the coming betrayal more convenient, were already doubting the practicability of a general strike in the event of war ("objective conditions" of

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* March issue of the monthly Zukunft, published by the Forward. This did not prevent the same Mr. Kantorovitch, as spokesman for the "left" in New York, from calling for unity of the S. P. *after* the convention. . . .

** V. Knorin: *Fascism, Social-Democracy, and the Communists,* Workers Library Publishers. 10c.

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Messrs. Green and Woll, etc.). The legacy of Morris Hillquit, who in 1917 declared "Socialism in the United States will not handicap the United States government by strikes" (Times, Feb. 11, 1917) was not forgotten in Detroit.

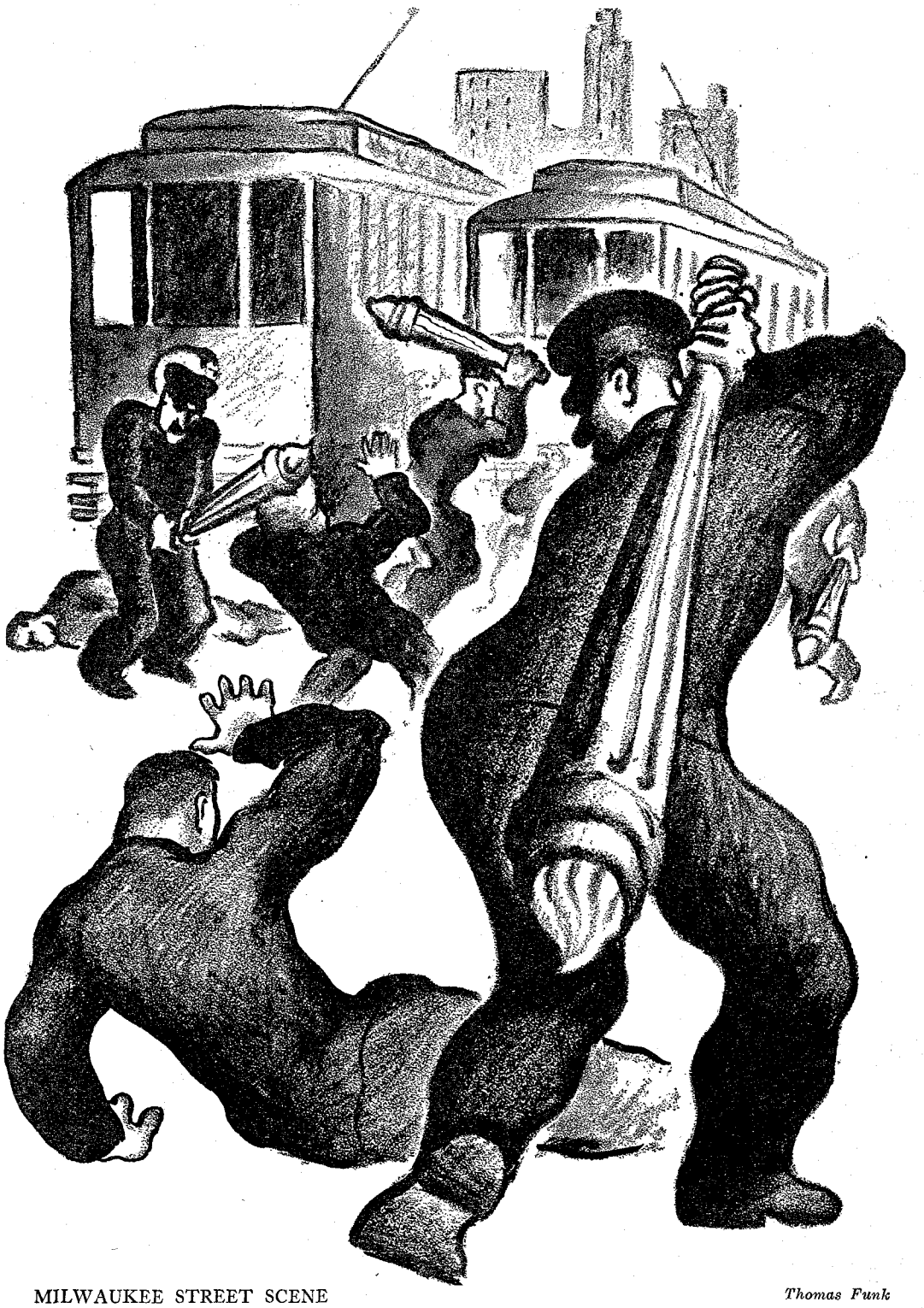
However, it is in the final and most important paragraph of the Declaration where the "left" wing exposes its treacherous content. Prefacing the fight against Fascism with the words "In its struggle for a new society, the Socialist Party seeks to attain its objectives by peaceful and *orderly means,*" the Declaration winds up:

> The Socialist Party proclaims anew its faith in economic and political *democracy,* but it unhesitatingly applies itself to the task of replacing the bogus democracy of capitalist parliamentarism by a genuine workers' democracy. Capitalism is doomed. *IF* it can be superseded by majority vote, the Socialist Party will rejoice. *IF* the crisis comes through the denial of majority rights *AFTER THE ELECTORATE HAS GIVEN US A MANDATE,* we shall not hesitate to crush by our labor solidarity the reckless forces of reaction and to consolidate the Socialist state. *IF* the capitalist system should collapse in a general chaos and confusion, which cannot permit of orderly procedure, the Socialist Party, whether or not in such a case it is a majority, will not shrink from the responsibility of organizing and maintaining a government under the workers' rule. True democracy is a worthy means to progress; but true democracy must be created by the workers of the world. (My emphasis.)

The final and most important paragraph of the Declaration is not merely muddled, and non-committal on a number of most essential points. "IF" capitalism can be superseded by a parliamentary majority. Can it be? Will it be? The Socialist "leaders" who want the workers to follow them do not themselves know. Nay, over and over again they proclaim their faith in democracy, *still creating illusions* as to the possibility of changing the system by parliamentary majority.

"If" the electorate will give the Socialists a majority and "if" the capitalists will refuse to recognize such majority. The Socialist "leaders" do not know how it is going to turn out. Some of them even are convinced that if they make their socialism a little more harmless than the "socialism" of Wels and Bauer—the way the Socialists of Scandinavia and Tzechoslovakia are doing now—the capitalists will not only keep them in parliament, but even trust them with the government.

But the "ifs" of the Declaration betray much more than that. The final "if" betrays the whole meaning of the "revolutionary" talk of the left wing. "If" the capitalist state should collapse! Whereas the old guardist Oneal allowed himself to state (New Leader, June 2) that "the delegates meet while the capitalist world is still (sic!) in collapse," "militants" and "revolutionists" in Detroit did not know whether it is going to collapse—in an orderly manner, or in "chaos and confusion" . . . This is not merely a case of chaos and confusion in the minds of the S.P. leaders. Clearly, the collapse of the capitalist system is not a matter of a certain day, or hour. It is a *process* upon which we have already entered. But this is precisely what the declaration denies. The whole thing is put forward as something lying way in the distance. SOME day in the future we may, possibly, perhaps, have to do this and that. Which is precisely how the Second International has always been talking about socialism. SOME day! Meanwhile—class collaboration, united front with the bourgeoisie against the forces working for revolution NOW.



MILWAUKEE STREET SCENE — *Thomas Funk*

"Not now," emphasized the new leader of the "left," Norman Thomas, in his speech for the support of the Declaration. According to the Detroit News, which on June 7 printed a letter of thanks of Dr. W. G. Bergman, general chairman of the S.P. convention, expressing his appreciation of the accuracy and understanding of its convention news reports, Norman Thomas declared during the turbulent debate: "It (the Declaration) is a calm, eloquent statement of what to do—not now—but in event of war, or in the event of the collapse of the capitalist government." (Incidentally, this is the same gentleman who in an interview in the same newspaper of June 1 stated: "It is childish to blab about what you might do in some tomorrow" . . .)

Not now. Here is the crux of the problem. Fight war, preparedness — not now. Fight against Fascism, for socialism—not now. How familiar this must sound to the workers of Vienna and Linz, even though the Declaration of the Detroit S.P. convention, with its muddled phrases about "consolidating" socialism "under" the "workers' rule," may be but a crude and less "revolutionary" copy of some of the numerous declarations of Otto Bauer.

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3. Go Left—Turn Right

The Detroit convention of the S.P. was aptly characterized by the Forward on June 4 in the following words:

> At the convention of the Socialist Party the lefts suffered complete defeat on a question which is of practical, substantial and immediate significance and attained a victory with regard to a question of a principled, abstract and absolutely non-substantial character.

The most important organ of the S.P. cannot make a single statement without betraying its lack of principle, its vulgarity and opportunism. Nevertheless (or because of that) this estimation of the S.P. convention is a correct one, both as to the non-substantiality of the "abstract" matter, the Declaration, and as to the substantiality of the decisions pertaining to *immediate action.*

The Detroit convention which adopted the "revolutionary" Declaration rejected the following paragraph in the resolution on the N.R.A.:

> The N.R.A. has also shown fundamental weakness in the American labor movement. It has shown up more clearly than any other event the obsolete *ideology* of the A.F. of L. The many instances in which leaders have counselled workers against striking or even ordered them back to work in the face of an overwhelming indication by the membership of a desire to strike, has indicated their abandonment of the belief that unions are fighting organizations. It has shown the inadequacy of the A.F. of L. structure in organizational work and the positive harm of the craft form of organization.

This paragraph was considered an attack *on the S.P.* "The S.P. is in the same boat with the A.F. of L.," cried the $17,500 manager of the Forward, B. C. Vladeck. The paragraph was *stricken out.* Instead, the convention *unanimously* adopted the resolution on the farm problem and other decisions of the convention followed closely the line of the old guard resolutions of the New York City S.P. pre-convention conference. So was the resolution adopted by the "left" resolutions committee on the United Front which denounced "Communist disruptions and intrigue" and called for action only by agreement between the Communist and the Second Internationals (New Leader, June 9).

The problems of the unemployed and of unemployment insurance were *not even discussed* at the convention. Likewise, the convention ignored the demands of the rank and file membership for the support of the Soviet Union in case of an attack.

The convention of a party which maintains Jim Crow branches for its Negro members (as many as there are) in the South could do nothing but treat the Negro problem the way it did.* At a conference on this problem held between regular sessions, there appeared six delegates in addition to the two Negro delegates. At this conference the Jim Crow policy of keeping Negroes in the South in separate branches was upheld. An attempt was made to raise the Scottsboro issue on the convention floor, but it was immediately squashed. Not even a formal resolution demanding the liberation of the Scottsboro boys was passed by the "left" resolutions committee!

In its resolutions on "Pan-American Socialist Relations" and in the attached proposal for a congress of "Ibero-American Democracy" (1) there is not a word on Cuba, not a hint at U.S. imperialistic aggression in Latin-America.

The crowning glory of this record of a "socialist" convention (a "left" convention, if you please!) was the speech of that "Bonze" (which is the German workers' equivalent for a fat bureaucrat), Max Winter, former Socialist vice-mayor of Vienna who ran away before the ship went down. This gentleman who helped pave the way for Dollfuss tried to justify the treacheries of the Austrian Social-Democratic leaders in the following manner. Winter said:

> Only on the short piece of our frontier against Czechoslovakia and against Switzerland did we have democratic neighbors—16 million all told; but behind Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Jugoslavia are the two Fascist countries, Poland and Rumania with nearly 50 million inhabitants and (also in the majority Fascist) the border states on the East Sea, and the newest fascist state: Bulgaria. And behind the approximately 180 million Fascist-ruled people are the 140 million Russian people under Stalin's dictatorship. The small democratic Austria was surrounded by more than 300 millions under dictatorship. *One against fifty!* (From the officially released copy of his speech.)

And there were the "revolutionists" who in their "Appeal" called the U.S.S.R. the "land of proletarian dictatorship" where "the workers in power" are "constructing a Socialist society," listening to this counter-revolutionary babble and not a voice was raised from the convention platform! This was just another glaring proof of the content of the "revolutionary" phraseology of the "lefts" and of the true reactionary character of the S.P. convention.

The New Deal of the S.P. is the old deal clumsily covered up. The petty-bourgeois reformer, Norman Thomas, who on the first day of the convention fought together with the old guard against the "left" Paris report (which was defeated, as shown above, by a narrow margin), on the third day stood at the head of the "left" front, fighting for the Declaration of Principles. However, at the first session of the newly elected national committee (which contains not one worker! not one Negro!) it was decided, at the suggestion of Thomas, to ask the advice of a committee of lawyers as to the legality of the language of the Declaration. In his statement in the New York Times of June 7, Thomas hastens to assure the bourgeoisie that the S.P. will seek power "by the ballot" and "by methods which do not compel a resort to wholesale violence or dictatorship." The politically degenerated S.P. could hardly select a better "leader" than this weasel-worded multi-faced gentleman. But Thomas was unnecessarily perturbed, since the Times had already stated in its editorial on June 5—while Thomas was still in Detroit—that the "IFS" of the Declaration meant a good deal for the bourgeoisie. Here is how succinctly the Times put it:

> There is always much virtue in your "if" and there may be a good deal of it in this particular one. Doubtless the resolution will undergo a lot of metaphysical explanation until it seems not to amount to much.

As for Thomas, the Times editorial had the following to say:

> One understands the pressure to which Mr. Thomas was subjected. There has been a steady push of the younger and more radical elements in the Socialist Party against what they think to be the obsolete "ideology" of its older leaders. When it appeared that the impatient and short-cut Socialists had won a majority of the Socialist convention, Mr. Thomas apparently felt compelled to go along with them.

The understanding displayed by the organ of Wall Street is both touching and based on cold facts. The Times can hardly forget how Hillquit and the entire S.P. leadership sabotaged and betrayed the St. Louis resolution, although it was Hillquit who reported the resolution to the convention on behalf of the sub-committee which drafted it (Charles E. Ruthenberg and Algernon Lee were the other two members). It depends a great deal on *who* is going to *execute* the new policy even when there *is* a turn to the left.

The seventh of the 21 conditions for admission to the Communist International adopted by the Second Congress of the C.I. in 1920 called not only for a complete break with the reformists, but for the expulsion of the Hillquits, Kautskys and MacDonalds as well. (The American S.P. at that time asked for admission; Hillquit was "ready" to "lead" the party on the "new road.") Events have proved, again and again, the correctness of the stand of the Communist Intenational. At the beginning of this year there was much talk among the "left" Socialists in Europe about a "new turn" in Belgium (the De Man "Plan"), which "turn" was demonstrated by the spectacle of Vandervelde (head of the Second International) and his colleagues at the death of King Albert and the coronation of King Leopold. The same "new turn" prompted Vandervelde to appeal to the League of Nations for the rescue of "socialist" Vienna. Not much happier was the ending of the "new turn" of the Socialists of Poland who at their convention held in February passed a resolution wherein it was stated that "under certain conditions" the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is inevitable. Under the onslaught of Fascism, immediately after the collapse of the German Social Democracy, left phrases were in the vogue among the various socialist leaders. Even Wels began using them. Now the leaders of the Polish S.P. again proclaim their faith in democracy, while the avowed purpose

* According to the Forward of June 7, there are three S.P. members in the state of South Carolina, 58 in Texas, 64 in Tennessee. There are 112 members in Oklahoma, 15 in Kansas.

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of Wels' "revolution" is for the restoration of democracy. However, true to American tempo Thomas, Hoan, Krzycki and the others began modifying their "left" phrases as soon as the convention adjourned. The S.P. must maintain its name as a "decent" and "legitimate" political party!

The old guard is sore, and not for nothing. Its attitude to the Declaration of Principles is a criminalistic one, that of the courts, the police, the bomb squad. Union-bureaucracy and its host of Socialist lawyers, the bourgeoisified Forward crowd, stand to lose a great deal. Their profitable undertaking are placed in danger by a "provocative, anarchistic, illegal and Communist doctrine," in the words of Louis Waldman (New Leader, June 9). The old guard remembers well the "trouble" caused by the St. Louis resolution which the bourgeoisie did not like. In the words of Abraham Cahan (Forward, June 10):

> This (St. Louis) resolution inflicted on our party very much harm. The party delegates who voted for that resolution felt very sorry afterward. They considered the resolution *A DANGEROUS STUPIDITY, LUNACY.* At that many members left the party, and some of the delegates who voted for the resolution were amongst them. A similar "revolutionary" resolution, still sharper, still more stupid, still crazier and more dangerous than the *ST. LOUIS "CONCOCTION"* was passed by the extremists in Detroit. (My emphasis.)

Space does not allow me to quote at length the article of this man Cahan, one of the leaders of the American S.P., the editor of the most important Socialist daily in the country and one of the most important organs of the Second International (Kautsky, Abramovitch, Bauer and others are among its contributors). The lack of principles and the political vulgarity of this man, his methods, his white-guardist attacks on the Soviet Union are illuminating. (For instance, in the same article Cahan states: The Daily Worker is campaigning for Thomas . . . Thomas is being helped "by the millions Soviet Russia is spending in America for publicity" . . . The "picnic" of workers' democracy is good only where there is a G.P.U. and where "millions of people can be banished from their homes without any reason." This Socialist paper always comes forward with its provocations against the Soviet Union at the most "opportune" moment. This time, Cahan did some agent-provocateur work for the McCormick-Dickstein Congressional committee investigating Soviet "publicity-propaganda").

But even the vilest attacks of the old guard cannot give revolutionary content to the misleading and counter-revolutionary Declaration, just as the attacks of the Republican old guard on the N.R.A. cannot make the Roosevelt New Deal an instrument for socialism. Likewise, the attack on Thomas cannot blind anybody to the misleading, unprincipled, and demagogic role he is playing.

There may be a split in the S.P. and there may not be one. The Declaration, which goes to a referendum before the membership, will most probably be purged of its "provocative, anarchistic, Communistic, and illegal" wording. Some of the old guard may leave the party when it is adopted (the "left" will stay at *any rate!*).

Of course, all this is immaterial. Even if such openly national Socialist elements as Sharts of Ohio leave the S.P. it will have as little effect on that party as resulted from the secession of the openly fascist Neo-Socialists (Renaudel, Marquet, Dea, etc.) from the S.P. of France.

For the truly revolutionary elements in the Socialist Party—and there is no doubt there are such among the rank and file—there is no alternative but to turn to the Communist Party.

Jersey Justice for Pickets

CORLISS LAMONT

THIS is the story of what happened to an orderly and law-abiding American citizen who went to Jersey City, on Wednesday, June 27, to carry on peaceful picketing before the Miller Parlor Furniture Company at 261 Orient Avenue.

First, let me give you some of the background. During the last few years the financial situation of Jersey City has become more and more precarious. Mayor Hague's city government has been striving desperately to find new resources. And the versatile Hague conceived the bright idea of attracting to the city new business, which would yield much-needed revenues through taxation, by promising employers that he would cut their labor troubles down to a minimum by preventing picketing and other such activities on the part of workers. The Miller Furniture Company was one of the corporations which took advantage of Boss Hague's offer. This spring it moved to Jersey City from Brooklyn, breaking its agreement with the Furniture Workers Industrial Union, refusing to pay $2,200 in back wages, and locking out all union members. Accordingly, the Union began to picket the factory. At the same time Hague and his policemen proceeded to keep their promise to the employers, arresting all pickets on trumped-up charges and throwing them into jail. I was the sixteenth picket to have this honor.

At about 9:45 Wednesday morning I started picketing in front of the Miller Company, I wore a sign reading: "The American Civil Liberties Union Tests the Right to Peacefully Picket in Jersey City." In a nearby automobile, A. L. Wirin, counsel to the Civil Liberties Union, sat as an observer. Since the police have been arresting observers as well as pickets and had only the day before jailed Alfred Hirsch of the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners for being an observer, Wirin's strategy of insulating himself by means of an automobile was most wise. Even as it was the police tried to haul him in on some pretext or other, but failed. I walked quietly and alone up and down the sidewalk. Four or five persons gathered at the end of the block and watched me. There was also a lady on a nearby porch who seemed to take some interest. I did not say a word to anyone. Finally a man, who I think was an official of the factory, came around the corner and walked by me, muttering, "One of these days I am going to beat up one of these bastards." I merely smiled, but will in all prabability be accused at my trial of insulting this fellow.

At the end of ten minutes nothing had happened, though there was a policeman roaming around. He kept dashing in and out of the factory and I judge he was getting his orders. Wirin thought that perhaps Jersey City had changed its policy regarding pickets and decided we ought to go to the nearest station house in order to have the police department definitely commit itself. This we did, but the lieutenant in charge stoutly denied there had been any alteration in policy and said pickets would be arrested as usual. He was very surly and remarked, "You people are carrying this thing too far." I want to make clear here that Wirin and I would have been only too glad to establish the principle of peaceful picketing without my going to the trouble, energy, and expense of arrest, jailing, and trial. The New York Herald Tribune, which wrote a most malicious account of the affair, tried to make out that I was just determined to be a martyr, yearning deeply for arrest as a "milestone" in my "career." This was the Tribune's oh so subtle way of attempting to cover up the basic labor issues involved. Of course, after what the lieutenant said, the only thing to do was to go back and continue picketing. We figured that the police radio car had not been available during my first spell.

As soon as I began picketing the second time a police runabout drove up with two officers in it. I was still alone on the sidewalk. The police car drove up to the other end of the block and one of the officers got out and talked to someone out of my sight around the corner.

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As the car came back in my direction a few people began coming around the corner, also toward me. It was as plain as day that the police had been collecting its crowd so that it could accuse me of causing some disturbance. The runabout stopped near me. "Hey you, come here," said a tough-mouthed officer. I didn't move, so he had to get out and come up to me. A crowd of about ten had now gathered. "I'm going to arrest you," said the officer. "You have no right to do that," I said. "Where's your warrant?" "I don't need one," he answered. "Now, listen, young feller, don't you talk back to me." The crowd had now increased to around fifteen. It was perfectly orderly. "I am carrying on peaceful picketing," I continued, "and I have a perfect right to do this under the New Jersey state laws and the United States Constitution." "You're arrested," declared the officer. And he took me by the arm and escorted me into the auto. The other officer then had a conversation with the radio mechanism and we drove off. I afterwards learned that the charge against me was that I "obstructed, impeded, and interfered in a public place with persons who were lawfully on said public place." Let me repeat again that I was entirely alone until the police came and caused a crowd to collect.

They took me to the station-house, frisked me, and searched me for concealed weapons. My old friend the lieutenant was in charge. His expression was very dour and pained as he booked me, took my address, and relieved me of my pen, pencil, and wallet. I said I thought it might be a good idea to count the money in the wallet. The lieutenant looked more pained than ever, but he counted it. Then I was transferred to a regular station-wagon with its cage-like iron bars and driven through the streets of Jersey City. The arresting officer guarded me. I argued with him a bit. He claimed that they would be delighted to have us picket if there was a strike on. But there was no strike. I replied that a good many of the workers seemed to think there was one, and that in any case a complete lock-out of union members would seem to warrant picketing. The officer informed me that the "mob" which I had gathered together numbered seventeen men and five women.

We arrived at the main Jersey City jail about 10:45 and entered the building. There they took my name and address again. Then some official gave the order, "Take him up and strip him." I felt somewhat uneasy over this order. They took me up in an elevator and handed me over to the warden. He proceeded to "strip" me, that is, to take away all my personal belongings, including spectacles, notes, and watch. I was permitted to retain a handkerchief. Then the warden ordered me to take off my necktie, my belt, my shoe-laces, and my garters. I asked why. He answered roughly: "You're not here to ask questions. You do as you're told." I started to remove a shoe lace and naturally put the heel of my right shoe on the edge of my wooden chair. "Take your shoe off that chair," shouted the warden. "You wouldn't do a thing like that at home, would you?" I replied that that was exactly what I would do at home. I finally handed over the demanded articles of clothing and found out later that the idea was to prevent me from committing suicide.

I was whisked down to the courtroom and arraigned before a judge. He agreed to postpone trial for a week and set my bail at the absurd and exorbitant sum of $1,500. All through this picket war the judges have been ordering ridiculously high bail to try and break the morale and the financial resources of the picketers. My counsel and I protested vigorously. While my counsel took steps to get the bail reduced, I was taken upstairs again. For the first time in my life I entered a regular jail block and was locked in a solitary steel cell as a prisoner. The cell was fairly clean with a hard wooden bench on which one could sit or lie down. No reading or writing materials are allowed to prisoners in these cells. They must stay in them 21 out of 24 hours during the day with absolutely nothing to do. I sat down and thought. I had seen the inside of jails portrayed in movies and have seen pictures of prisoners peering out between the bars of their cells. To be actually in that same situation myself gave me quite a shock.

Suddenly I heard a voice that I seemed to recognize. And it flashed on me that perhaps Alfred Hirsch had not been bailed out, as I had thought. "Hirsch," I called out. "Yes, —who is it?" he called back. "Corliss Lamont." Then we had a loud weird conversation with our voices echoing down the corridor. We discussed the situation. He informed me that Schwarz of the Furniture Workers' Union was in the cell next to him. Because they were both coming up for trial the next morning, they had decided not to go to the expense of getting bail. Since my trial was a whole week off, Hirsch advised me to get bail, and get out as soon as possible. "The worst thing," he said, "is that we have nothing to do." Evidently their idea is to try and make the prisoner go crazy as soon as possible.

At about this time lunch was served. One of the prisoners cooperated with the guard in bringing around a cup of coffee, three pieces of white bread, and some sort of macaroni dish. They shoved these things through a little wicket in the door of the cell. I did not feel like eating. I sipped some of the coffee, let the macaroni go, and kept the bread for possible future use. I put it on the small wicket platform. Pretty soon the guard came by and ordered me to put it somewhere else. So I put it on top of one of the cell bars where it balanced nicely. I was simply trying to find a clean and sanitary place for it. Then the guard walked by again and told me to put the bread somewhere else. So I shifted it to the bench.

In about half an hour the guard came around with his keys, unlocked the door, and said, "Come on, 32." I followed, thinking perhaps that my bail had arrived. I walked at a natural pace, but the guard seemed in an awful hurry. "Come on, come on," he called back to me. I did not alter my pace and asked him if he expected me to do a 440-yard dash. When we got to the entrance of the cell block another guard stepped up and handcuffed my right hand to his left. I inquired as to where I was going. "Never mind, buddy, come along." The elevator went down to the bottom of the building, we walked through a couple of rooms, and arrived at the fingerprinting department. I protested strongly against being fingerprinted. They said it was the law. I claimed that ordinarily only persons guilty of felonies were fingerprinted. First they took the impression of the four index fingers; then of the thumb. They also weighed me, registered my height, and wrote down the color of my eyes and hair. The sergeant in charge said that perhaps I could get back my fingerprints through legal procedure in the courts.

I was locked in my cell again. At two o'clock, however, all prisoners were let out of their cells for a couple of hours and allowed to congregate in one of the corridors. Those who wanted to were allowed to few minutes to write a letter with pencil and paper provided by the guard. I wrote one letter, using the wall as a desk. We had to leave the envelopes unsealed so that the warden could censor the contents. There were about fifty prisoners altogether and I talked with some of them. A number had been hauled in on the outrageous "suspicious persons" ordinance permitting the Jersey City police to arrest anyone whose looks they don't happen to like. They clap such persons into jail, set impossibly high bail like $2,500 or $10,000, and keep the prisoners locked up for ten days or even longer. I talked with a worker who had been arrested as he was quietly walking home one night. He was terribly bitter, wanted to know what the hell use it was to be decent, and intimated that his experience with Jersey City justice might turn him from a hard-working and law-abiding citizen into a criminal. I suggested that he turn his indignation to account in the co-operative working-class movement.

About 3:30 the guard came through and called out my number. We went back to my cell to get my coat and then went out to the warden's office. There they gave me back my things. They were in a great hurry and would not give me time to put back my shoelaces. I stuffed them into a pocket and went out the door. "Warden," I said, "I will remember you for a long, long, time." When I got downstairs, I found that my bail had arrived. I signed a document concerning it and then walked out. I was free, at least until my trial July 5.

I have written exactly what happened and perhaps it may be of some use to others who will go on the picket line at Jersey City and get jailed. My general impression was that I was treated like anyone else, but that it is the policy of the prison officials to humiliate prisoners as much as possible and try to break down their morale. The Herald Tribune attempted to give the impression that I expected special privileges. I neither asked for nor expected nor got special privileges. It is true

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that I offered vigorous objection at times. And it still seems to me incongruous that I and the other pickets who have been arrested for walking peacefully up and down a sidewalk a few minutes should be subjected to what I have described. But as a matter of fact the treatment of all types of prisoners in America often approaches the barbarous. Our prison system is a medieval relic.

I want to make clear, finally, that my day in Jersey City was distinctly not a lark. Though the whole episode was over and done with in some six hours, I must admit frankly that it was for me a gruelling psychological experience. That is the simple fact and I make no apologies for it. But I feel that the effects of the experience will be all for the good. I have suffered no real harm and have received a tremendous impetus to fight with every bit of strength I possess against the stupid, cruel, and corrupt system which Hague's Jersey City so well typifies today. And I am hopeful that this test case will serve in some measure to break through a near-fascist set-up in which the administration, the police, the courts, and the employers suppress with force and frame-up the most elementary rights of the workers.

British Fascism Is Set Back

JOE RIVERS

LONDON.

OLYMPIA is a kind of Madison Square Garden for London. It holds fifteen thousand people, and the British Union of Fascists rented it for the evening of June 7. Sir Oswald Mosley was billed to speak. All the plans were drawn to pull off the greatest meeting in the short history of British Fascism. Instead, it turned out to be the flop supreme, and every day since last Thursday the animosity against British Fascism has grown stronger.

If the meeting failed, it was not because well-dressed people refused to buy expensive seats in blocks, for they did; and not because the plain people held aloof, for they did not; but because of the heroic determination and courage of the Communist men and women who knowingly went into the hall and braved brutal maltreatment in order to prove to Britain that Fascism stands for cruelty, suppression of free speech, and universal reaction.

The iron-hearted purpose of Communist men and women, and certain allies among the working class, defeated Mosley, and exposed him for the leader of thugs and blackguards that he is. The black eyes, the stabbings, the blows on the head, the bloody and bruised bodies carried away by the opponents of the Leader's stewards have done more to advertise the real essence of British Fascism than weeks of laborious propaganda. The Blackshirts used rubber truncheons, kunckle-dusters, pieces of glass, razors, blackjacks. They spared neither man nor woman. Ten Fascists would take on one Communist, pinion his arms, strike him into bleeding insensibility. They kicked them when they were down, ripped clothes off their back, slugged right and left. That night Londoners saw into the future—they saw what might be in store for them IF. . . .

I arrived outside of Olympia shortly after six o'clock. The crowds were already thickly milling about. The police, on foot and mounted, were there in hundreds, in thousands. A cordon blocks distant turned away demonstrators marching toward the hall. The comrades passed this barrier, mingled with the crowds, shouting slogans, sang the Internationale, sold the Daily Worker under the heels of the horses, passed out slips exposing Mosley's ideas, roused the spirit of the masses. The atmosphere grew tense: everybody felt that history was to be made that night. It was.

In busses and limousines people thronged to Olympia. A single door was opened to receive them. Fearing a mass gate-crashing, the Fascists admitted ticket holders only in small batches. This delayed the opening of the meeting by at least a half hour, spoiled the cheap stage effect of Mosley's "triumphal entry" and dampened the ardor of his supporters inside the hall. Even the fascist national anthem sounds stupid after you have heard it played for about forty minutes over and over again.

Olympia is a vast rectangle. High at one end rose a tribune, decorated with fascist banners, and flanked at either end by searchlights such as Hitler uses at his meetings. A massed group of Blackshirts filled the platform. Among these Mosley was indistinguishable. You could not see his face unless you were close to the tribune: from the back of the hall he was only a pin-point of light. That was the brightness shining on the silver buckle of his belt. To most people he was a Voice coming badly over the loudspeakers.

Looking about, you saw more Blackshirts and their woman's auxiliary, the Blackskirts, than you had ever seen at one time. Hundreds of them. More than hundreds. Patrolling the aisles, watching their stoolpigeons mixed in with the seated crowds to give a signal, selling fascist literature. Lower middle-class faces, a little weary, sallow, trying to act spruce and soldier-like. Plump faces, some of them, public schoolboys or office managers; Empire-building faces, a few of them, faces of men who had clubbed starving peasants in Burma, or taught Kenya "niggers" their place, and were now ready to apply these "imperial" lessons to the workers at home. Everywhere, this ominous black uniform, symbol of hate and reaction.

You thought: is this a public meeting, or a love-feast for Mosley's own supporters? His own people could give him a good hand, when it came time (if ever) for applause. The crowd could be cold, but a good impression could still be made by their clapping. And they knew when to clap. No false modesty about the Mosley boys.

I am late entering. Here is a seat, beside a relic of Victorian gentility, and a pathetic mother from Golder's Green. There is the tribune, with Mosley on it. The pin-point of light is moving: he must be emphasizing a word. But to us at the far end he is a Voice, and one that comes over badly. "Rumble, boom, boom, rumble, mumble." Well, we shan't learn much that way.

Suddenly we sit up and take notice. "Down with Fascism and War!" Standing up, a young worker hurls his challenge through the hall. A knot of Blackshirts pounces on him, the worker lets fly with his fists, he is slugged over the head from behind, he crumples to the floor, his mates and the Blackshirts are all fighting confusedly together. It is like a larger football scrimmage. The moving mass breaks up, we see the worker, bloody cuts on his face, limp. The Blackshirts pinion his arms, drag him along, and, in full view of the audience, strike him again and again in various parts of the body. When they get him outside, they beat him up, kick him down, rip and claw and scratch. Why do they do these things? Because they want to build a New and Better Britain, of course.

The peace of the meeting has vanished. Shouts and cries break out all over the back part of the hall. New fights start. People stand up. A beefy faced man yells, "Throw the Reds out." The Blackshirts patrol the aisles, chanting: "Take your seats please, take your seats, please, take your seats, please." People pay no attention, they watch the scuffle in the gallery, the fight over on the left, they ignore the Voice, still mumbling. The Voice stops, appealing a last time for order. A girl screams, there, the Blackshirts are at her, pulling her hair, pummeling, scratching—we will make a better England for our sisters. The Blackshirts down below applaud when she is dragged out, every sadistic fibre in their bodies quivering with satisfaction. For the Blackshirts who come with skinned knuckles, they have adoring looks.

The Voice kept trying every two or three minutes to make itself heard. Each attempt was met by a demonstration, and every demonstration by rushes of stewards toward the shouting workers. The Blackshirts organized little cheers, like the high school yell at home:

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M-O-S-L-E-Y, Mos-ley then gave the Fascist salute. Their squeaks plus the deeper-lunged chants of the men, "Take your seats, please, take your seats, please," and the universal murmur and chatter of the crowd kept any one from listening to the Voice. At last It gave in: It kept silence for a long interval. More fights, more bloody heads, more limp bodies dragged out.

When some adventurous Communists climbed up on girders right over the middle of the hall, and were pursued by Blackshirts, it looked for some tense moments as though the first murder of the evening was about to be committed. But the Voice bade Its eager helpers to be careful. No Communist was pushed to a horrible death below, though no one could be sure that the danger was over for some anxious minutes.

So much for some of the details of the evening. Remember, this was to have been the largest and most impressive meeting yet held in all England by the B.U.F. Instead, it was a washout: Mosley did not get his prepared speech across, with its lies and deceitful promises. He did not create any impression except one of disgust—and disgust that will cost him dear. The unconverted, eye-witnesses to the devilish brutality and barbarous methods of his crew, will not be deceived by his line of talk. The unconverted public knows what is going on in Germany today, knows that Mosley aspires to be a British Hitler, knows what that means. Every blow from a blackjack, every cut with a razor blade, every bruise and wound levelled at workers that night at Olympia advertised to London and the world that the essence of Fascism, when it gets down to action, is the same here as in Vienna or Rome.

The reaction to the bestial conduct of the Blackshirts was immediate and profound. That reaction is today (June 13) still in process of expressing itself. Three Members of Parliament, Conservatives, who were in the audience, wrote a letter to the papers. "Men and women were knocked down, and, after they had been knocked down, were still assaulted and kicked on the floor. It will be a matter of surprise to us if there were no fatal injuries." A clergyman, guest of Mosley's mother, wrote: "What I saw in the corridors on my way to the exit entirely disgusted me. [Ejected persons] were being treated by an overwhelming number of Blackshirts in the most brutal and outrageous manner."

Ministers of the Crown joined over the week-end in declaring that such violence at public meetings must come to a full stop. Premier MacDonald issued a statement that "this country will accept no dictatorship and no tampering with the liberties of a democracy." The Government has already had to answer questions in the House of Commons, is meeting this morning in a Cabinet Council to discuss steps to be taken to prevent such outbreaks in the coming months, and tomorrow the House will be the scene of a full-dress debate at which the entire question of uniformed bands and Fascist violence will be threshed out.

But the coming of Fascism in Britain will not be stopped by the hypocritical gestures and speeches by Tory parliamentarians, who have their own fish to fry, and will fry them in Fascist grease if and when it suits their taste to do so. The coming of Fascism in England will be stopped, just as Mosley's Olympia meeting was stopped: by the solidarity of working class men and women who are not afraid to stand up for their rights. If the working class in the heart-city of English capitalism is true to itself, and organizes in time, it can make this would-be lion as harmless as a lamb. And signs are not wanting that the German lesson, that the Vienna lesson, that the lesson of Paris is not being wasted.

Mosley is moving fast these days. Who shall say that the English working class can not outdistance him?

The Fascist Inter-Nazi-onal

HAROLD WARD

"It will be the task of Fascism to furnish the brains of Italians a little less sumptuously in order to develop their characters a little bit more"—Premier Benito Mussolini, speaking in defense of the recent $160,000,000 Air Budget before the Italian Chamber of Deputies.

THIS sardonic epigram, with its concealed admission that intelligence is the last thing wanted in Italy, or by Fascism anywhere, has about it a *macabre* tang—an odor, as the Chinese say, of death. In fact (as Ilya Ehrenbourg has already suggested in his excellent sketch *Culture and Fascism,* in THE NEW MASSES for May 29th) it was spoken by a death's head. By hundreds, thousands of death's heads, precariously attached to the skeletons which rattle —like so many machine-guns—in the disease-ridden, armor-plated closets of a doomed class. Let us translate the gibberish of these skeletons in terms of facts taken from the world of the living. And first:

ITALY. Proclaiming that "perpetual peace is detrimental and negative to the fundamental virtues of man," Mussolini announces the expenditure of one billion lire for air defense, and another billion for navy expenditure: this at the same time as he is busy attempting to make Hitler *persona grata* to the League of Nations and the moribund Disarmament Conference. A Budget deficit of 4 billion lire and an estimated trade balance deficit of nearly 3 billion lire are to be made good by the most rigorous economy methods. The salaries of State employes have recently suffered another drastic cut and, in relation to Great Britain alone, Italian wages dropped by 14 points between 1928 and 1933. As evidence of the "moral tranquillity" which Mussolini discovers in the Italian home, we have: an increase of 48 percent in infant mortality between 1926 and 1931 and a steady increase of crimes against property (largely thefts of food); an increase in bankruptcies from a monthly average of 321 in 1922, before Fascism was established, to 2,003 in 1932, and a total of over 21,000 in 1933. The systematic drive for progressively diminishing standards of living is borne out by consumption figures for certain commodities: for sugar the per capita consumption has dropped, since 1927, to 15 pounds *per year* (compare with the hundred pounds per year used by Americans and Englishmen); in the same period the use of table salt dropped from 295,000 tons to 178,000 tons, and 1932 coal consumption was nearly 6 million tons less than in 1929.

On the labor front, in addition to constant strikes, unemployment and discontent in both rural and urban districts, the Fascist terror has drawn its lines tighter around "political criminals." In 1932 Mussolini's "special courts" sentenced to a total of 1,765 years of hard labor 241 "anti-fascists," of whom 204 were Communists and (significantly for a country like Italy) *only one* anarchist. Up till March, 1934, another 108 (of whom 88 were Communists) received total sentences of 791 years. Meanwhile—to conclude an all-too-brief account with a hint as to the real purpose behind Fascism—a public debt of nearly 100 billion lire (*one-quarter of the entire wealth of Italy*) did not prevent 110 companies out of 261 from increasing their 1933 profits; another 17 diminished their losses; 17 others converted a loss into profit, and three broke even.

"Whatever happens," declaims the Italian skeleton, amid the Pontine marshes of Fascist "recovery," "the Italian people will face the future with complete discipline." In which he is volubly echoed by his fellows in

GERMANY. "Our love of peace is without qualification," remarked the Nordic Hitler upon his return from a love-feast with the Mediterranean Mussolini; "but we will protect fanatically the honor of our people." As thus: since 1931 average hourly wages have fallen 21 percent, and further deductions of 27 percent are made for income taxes, unemployment and sickness insurance (these deduc-

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tions were 13 percent in 1932). Despite the jugglery of official statisticians, unemployment since the Nazis took power has not decreased by much more than 500,000: so many new "positions" have been compulsory that one or two large manufacturing firms, in spite of increased production, are carrying on their starvation payrolls some 10,000 workers in excess of actual needs. In such instances, however, government "subsidies," taken largely from the workers (6 billion marks last year) come to the rescue: where, as in the heavy industries stimulated by intense war preparations, employment has actually increased, wage-figures tell a different story. For example, the I. G. Chemical Trust reports an increase in employment of 35 percent, *but wages increased by only 1½ percent.* Living standards are being attacked with a relentlessness to excite the admiration even of Mussolini; the Nazi "labor regulations," People's Courts and the vicious Labor Front see to it that the workers spend most of their "leisure" pulling in their belts. Dr. Ley, chief of the Labor Front, has told them, candidly, to "renounce wage increases and such-like things," while a certain big German executive, speaking not for publication, prophesied that:

"However comical it may sound, in many respects we shall have *to go backwards 200 years.* And above all we shall have to lower habits of life *to the limit.*" (The Communist International.)

But, says the genial optimist, shaking a reproving finger, everybody knows that Germany is half-mad. They manage such things better in

FRANCE. The French, noted for their moderation and thrift, will leave no stone unturned in their efforts to maintain the status quo: especially for those who have been accustomed to the amenities of life. Accordingly, and in order to "rectify" a Budget deficit of about $250 million it is proposed: first, to reduce State expenditures by 2,760,000,000 francs; of this amount 360,000,000 francs represents salary cuts of from 5 to 10 percent for 700,000 civil servants (*exclusive* of the Army and Navy), 500,000,000 francs a "reorganization" of civil pensions, and another 300,000,000 francs deductions from unemployment relief and other social services. Ex-servicemen are among the victims of these savage "economies," while 80,000 civil servants and 60,000 railway workers are to lose their jobs. Second, a notable series of tax reductions will assist the heroic upper middle classes to keep up appearances on the Rue de la Paix and the Champs Elysées. Super-taxes are to be lowered from 36 to 20 percent, taxes on trade and industry from 15 to 12 percent, real estate and dividend taxes from 16 to 12 and from 17 to 10 percent respectively. Incomes above 20,000 francs are to be mulcted 3 instead of 6 percent.

Meanwhile, and in spite of feeble Socialist opposition, war expenditures of more than three billion francs have been approved by the Chamber of Deputies. In the air, on land and on the sea France proposes to tell the world how strong and invincible she is, while at home the rising poverty and discontent of the workers is being dealt with, aside from the government, by such patriotic bodies as: Action Française, 60,000 members, Jeunesse Patriote (definitely fascist), 90,000 strong, all armed; Solidarité Française, 180,000 members (Coty's group; lately recruiting North African tramps at 30 francs a day); Croix de Feu, similar to the American Legion, with 35,000 members and 130,000 sympathizers; Taxpayers' Federation, composed of 700,000 small shop-keepers who are merely waiting for an energetic "leader" to adopt pure Fascism.

ENGLAND. Sir Oswald Mosley is getting into his stride, with no other resistance from the Government than feeble Parliamentary quibbles as to whether black or other colored shirts may be considered "uniforms" under the law. The violence at Olympia was merely premature: Sir Oswald can afford to wait. The bitterly hated Unemployment Act, 1934, has now become law: this restores the meagre "benefits" in force before October, 1931, and provides for regular weekly "contributions" from the employed ranging from 2d for children under 16 to 10d for adult males. (The contribution by employers is taken care of by lowered wages—naturally). The so-called "balanced budget" is merely another way of standing the workers on their heads; it was received with "great jollification" in the financial districts of London, many of whose leaders "adjourned to the public houses to celebrate." As well they might for—as Mr. W. H. Williams has pointed out in a shrewd analysis for the Labour Research Department of Great Britain—

> "the new budget is a measure which continues to transfer the burden of the crisis on to the shoulders of the workers and ensures that the capitalist class shall retain the gains which have been secured by repressive government measures against the working-class."

For example: The standard rate of income tax has been reduced by 6d in the pound; "this," remarked Lord Herbert Scott, President of the reactionary Federation of British Industries, "is the greatest single measure that can bring relief to industry." Expenditure on the National Debt (mostly for past wars) and on the Fighting Services will reach 47 percent of the total for the year, exceeding the amounts to be spent on education, health, pensions and labor by £548,000,000. Subsidies to various industries (aviation, coal, shipping, sugar beets, etc.) will come to over £600,000,000—while the unemployed are to receive from the budget surplus only £3,600,000. The cruel "Means test" is to remain in force: has it not already "saved" the Exchequer the amount of £20,000,000?—two-thirds of the subsidy allotted to the coal industry whose dictators (Powell-Duffryn, Welsh Associated, Ebbw Vale) scrap men as calmly as machines.

JAPAN, apt student of western imperialism, is running her own three-ring Fascist circus, stretching from the Soviet Border to the island of Formosa. In my last article I gave a few scattered pictures of the show in which Japan, as ringmaster, bestrode an angry tiger. Recently a new "act" has been put on, in the shape of the arrest, imprisonment and forthcoming trial of Professor William Maxwell Bickerton, a New Zealander, instructor and lecturer in the High Schools of Tokyo. It is charged by the authorities that Professor Bickerton engaged in nefarious Communist activities for the Communist Party of Japan, that he visited Moscow, London and New York for propaganda purposes, that he contributed 500 Yen to the party—of which he was about to become a member when arrested on March 13th. The deepest secrecy was maintained on the whole affair until about the middle of May, when the government raised the ban—in order, by systematic misrepresentation, still further to discredit the "dangerous thought" activities of the Japanese Communist Party. But even Trans-pacific, the avowed organ of Japanese trade interests abroad, aside from reporting the vaguest of rumors on so-called Communist "gangsterism," can discover in Bickerton's career little more than the kind of "illegal" acts to which any radical organization is committed under forcible suppression. He gave money at a time when it was needed; helped to distribute forbidden pamphlets; translated articles for the Communist International—and when in New York visited Michael Gold at the offices of THE NEW MASSES, and arranged with International Publishers for publication of a volume of Japanese proletarian stories (issued in London last summer by Martin Lawrence). To give an idea of how "bad" an influence Bickerton was subjected to in his youth, Trans-pacific digs up the terrible fact that his grandfather was a friend of the "revolutionary" Kropotkin, and had himself established a "Communist community" in, presumably, New Zealand.

Despite all the official hullaballoo over Bickerton's arrest and trial for "dangerous thought" the whole incident demonstrates the strength and toughness of the Communist Party in one of the most vindictively reactionary countries in the world today. For Bickerton is not alone, even in his own profession: in the very next column Trans-pacific reports the conviction on charges of communist activities of 27 teachers from the Nagano Prefecture alone: that the sentences were "lighter than had been demanded by procurators" is certainly not due to a sudden spurt of tolerance and mercy on the part of a government whose hatred of radicalism—especially of the Marxist variety—is only equalled by its wholesome fear of the political solidarity and military readiness of the Soviet Union.

The Fascist Inter-nazi-onal is growing rapidly—but only because it thrives on decay, on fear, insecurity and the lethal toxins of hate. Parasitic itself, it is committed to the destruction of everything which has the capacity for independent growth and vigorous self-perpetuation. It is the chance of a mortally diseased social organism, and for its complete removal from the still-living body nothing but the most drastic surgery will suffice.

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Moley—Provocateur-in-Chief

III: *Organizing Civil War Against the Workers*

WILLIAM FRANCIS DUNNE

CONCERNED mainly with Communists, Moley nevertheless takes time out to show his contempt for the Negro people. Ridiculing what he and Coleman call the Communist "tactic," he says, "This nomenclature and 'tactic' *await the pen of another Octavus Roy Cohen, who immortalized the 'Order of I Will Arise'.*"

The stories referred to, by Cohen, one of the Saturday Evening Post literati, are remarkable for their vicious and would-be humorous ridicule of Negroes. They are written to conform to the tradition of the Southern upper classes that Negroes are congenitally mentally and morally inferior to whites. Moley was born and educated in the North, but his boss needs Southern votes. His laudatory reference to the Cohen contributions to race prejudice and hatred reveals his own chauvinistic mentality.

But the hypocrisy and political dishonesty of Moley are shown best always when he attempts to deal with the question of violence and the Communist Party program. *"Apparently the use of violence,"* he says, *"is declining in favor."* THE NEW MASSES declares the fultility of "the lone shot and the isolated bomb." The *new* "tactic" is to refrain from violence until the following prerequisites are present—"First, the dominant class can no longer rule; second, the turbulence of the discontented masses reaches such a pitch that they are ready to descend into the streets to fight; and third, there must be a Communist Party able to guide the elements of revolution into Soviet channels." (My emphasis.)

Communists are against terroristic acts of individuals as a method of waging the class struggle or combatting tyranny. Such methods are typical of the ruined and despairing middle-class, disillusioned by the decay of capitalism, but unwilling to trust and unite with the working-class. It is these elements, and the line between them and the slum proletariat and criminal groups is almost invisible, who in Germany backed by big capital, have made a science of brutal murder and unspeakable tortures as weapons for use against the working-class and the Jewish people.

Individual terrorism, no matter how worthy the motive that actuates it, plays into the hands of the enemies of workers. It is no solution. It deludes workers by seeming to simplify the methods of the class struggle. It furnished a fertile field for police agents and provocateurs of all types. That is why this type of capitalist agent—Moley, Green and Lewis of the American Federation of Labor, Woll of the A. F. of L. and National Civic Federation, Coleman, LaGuardia, O'Ryan, etc.—are always trying to picture Communists as terrorists, as a prelude to further attacks. *Moley would like to have a lot of Thaelmann cases in the United States.*

The position of the Communist International and its sections on the question of violence in the revolutionary struggle and on the prerequisites for the proletarian revolution has always been clear. THE NEW MASSES is not a publication of the Communist Party and Moley knows it, nor is there any *"new tactic"* adopted recently by the Communist Party of the United States regarding the strategy and tactics of struggle for the conquest of government power by the working-class, or for the struggles for partial demands.

It has already been stated that a clear distinction must be drawn between the political arguments of opponents and provocation intended to justify and make easier the use of violence against workers and their organizations. Moley pretends to some culture. Most of his writings have dealt with political subjects. He is a vice-president of the American Political Science Association. Either he has not read Lenin on the state and revolution and thus is unacquainted with the most important contributions in this field since Marx and Engels, and, therefore, is too ignorant for his opinions to carry any weight, or if he *has* read Lenin on the subject, he deliberately distorts the official Communist position to justify unrestrained police brutality against anyone they wish to label Communist.

In 1920 Lenin wrote, in "'Left' Communism—An Infantile Disease":

"But when the question is one of the practical activities of the masses, of the disposition—if it be permissible to use this expression—of armies numbering millions, and of the distribution of all the class forces of a given society, for the last and decisive fight, here propaganda alone, the mere repetition of the truths of 'pure' Communism, will avail nothing. Here one must count by millions and tens of millions, not by thousands, as, after all, the propagandist does, who is a member of a small group that never yet led the masses. Here one must ask onself, *not only whether the vanguard of the revolutionary class has been convinced, but* also *whether the historically active forces of all classes of a given society have been properly distributed, so that the final battle may not be premature.* One must make sure, first, that *all the class forces hostile to us have fallen into complete enough confusion, are sufficiently at loggerheads with one another, have sufficiently weakened themselves in a struggle beyond their capacities,* to give us a chance for victory; secondly, one must ensure that all the vacillating, wavering, unstable, intermediate elements—the petty bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie democracy, in contradistinction to the bourgeoisie—have *sufficiently exposed themselves in the eyes of the people, and have disgraced themselves in their material bankruptcy;* thirdly, *one must have the feeling of the masses in favor of supporting the most determined, unselfishly resolute, revolutionary action against the bourgeoisie.*

"Then, indeed, Revolution is ripe; then, indeed, if we have correctly gauged all the conditions briefly outlined above, and if we have chosen the moment rightly, our victory is assured." (My emphasis.)

If Moley, provocateur-in-chief to the Roosevelt administration, will ponder the above quotation, he will see that especially in connection with the second point, the Astor millions are enabling him to fulfill the historical rôle of his social class there outlined; that N.R.A., its lowering of mass living standards in favor of increased profits for monopoly capital, its destruction of foodstuffs to raise prices in a land where millions are in desperate want, its legalization of company unions and Fascist methods (steel companies supervising strike votes, arming of bands of professional thugs, etc.) in basic industries, the increasing use of armed force against the Negro people and workers and their organizations, its gigantic military expenditures, its ruin of huge numbers of the city middle-class and farmers, the increase in unemployment and the cutting down of relief—all are discrediting American capitalist "democracy" among the toiling population.

Communists, according to Moley, grow restive at signs of "improving economic conditions." He complains that we quote from The Annalist, "from capitalistic orthodoxy," to show "that business is not improving." Why not? All capitalist advisers are not Moleys. Many of them tell the truth—to the capitalists. Capitalists have to tell the truth to each other, not always, but once in a while. Many capitalist groups "are at loggerheads with each other" and when thieves fall out—

The Communist Party organizes workers to fight for immediate improvement of their economic conditions. But they know that it is mainly a fight to live. The *forms* of this struggle are dictated mainly by the policy and tactics of the capitalists and their government. No permanent and decisive, or even substantial improvement in the economic status of the working-class is possible under capitalism. At the same time, if workers did not organize to combat the "constant encroachments" of capital on their living standards and political rights, they would degenerate into a helpless army of slaves, starved and broken.

"The one enemy," says Moley in Astor's Today, "inexorable, overwhelming, that spells

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death of Communistic hopes *is the economic improvement of the conditions* of the American people."

It is just as easy as that! Why doesn't Moley get Roosevelt, Astor, Morgan, Rockefeller, Mellon, etc., to perform this simple task and wipe out Communism with one stroke? It is so easy to destroy the Communist base in this way that one wonders why Moley and his fellow strategists are calling on the police to do the job.

With such advisers added like the curse of Cromwell to the insoluble contradictions of its program, it is clear why the Roosevelt regime is in a crisis. The democratic drapery with which Moley enfolds himself always falls into disarray when he gets back to his favorite topic of Communist violence. "Avoid not only injustice *but the appearance of injustice,*" he says. "The Mooney case has been a powerful aid to Communism.'

So the Mooney case is only *"the appearance of injustice."* The imprisonment of Mooney for 18 years on a framed up charge because of his labor activities is not injustice. It is merely inconvenient to have the issue raised all the time by Communists.

"Avoid violence," says the inflated pedagogue whose big moment came when he strutted the deck of one of Wall Street's battleships on his way to tell the English people and his own chief, Hull, where to get off at. *"Never has the art of provoking police officials been developed to the extent used by Communists. It is irritating to human impulses; but the best police are those who meet such irritation with self-restraint. Communists grow on street violence. Their papers are full of accounts of such incidents."*

The arbitrary powers of American police—they have been made judges, juries and executioners—and their brutal acts are matters of public knowledge. They need no provocation except the sight of workers demanding food, clothing and shelter. *If some of them refrain from the full exercise of their powers, they get the kind of orders and disciplinary measures featured in Police Commissioner O'Ryan's statement.* The relation between the police heads and actual criminals are those of friendly enemies. Nothing else explains the fact that every so often the police forces are increased but that there is no decrease in crime or criminals. Occasionally policemen and criminals shoot each other, but this is a violation of the rules of the game due to mistakes, misunderstandings or in revenge for a double-cross. Gangsters are one of the forces of capitalism. They are allowed certain immunities in return for services against workers—spying, slugging and killing organizers, protecting strikebreakers, raiding workers' headquarters, etc.

The *major* efforts of the police forces are used in maintaining "law and order"—the euphemism for strikebreaking, for the wholesale clubbings, gassings, shootings and jailings of striking workers, unemployed demonstrators, ruined farmers, agricultural workers and Negroes organizing against robbery and lynch terror. Witness the recent violence against workers in Alabama, California, Minneapolis, Toledo, New Orleans.

Moley draws a touching picture of police officers worn to the breaking point by unselfish devotion to protection of the public welfare. Torn from the bosoms of their families, compelled to be ever on the alert to thwart the Communist "plots," whose details can be read every day in the Daily Worker, manfully resisting the innumerable provocations in the form of unemployed and hungry workers appearing on the streets, obviously with the single intention of irritating the police; or it may be a strike or picket line of workers trying to raise their wages slightly above the subsistence level, that compels the police to maintain such a grip on their praiseworthy desire—and clubs—to beat hell out of these living menaces to "American institutions." Prevented by their membership in and the pledge of the Holy Name Society from hurling at these workers the foul vocabulary of the gutters and brothels, is it any wonder that many police officers crack under the strain and for a few moments forget that they are servants and not masters?

"I am terribly upset this morning, Harold," one police officer says to another, according to the Moley legend, "I had to smack a pushcart peddler a couple of times because the fruit I picked up was rotten inside. Then I was called for duty at a demonstration of these Reds at the relief office. One woman looked so hungry she provoked me until I couldn't stand it. I kicked her feet from under her and then she provoked me by screaming and looking so scared I had to sock her a couple of times. She bled a lot and this provoked the rest of the detail and there was a lot more clubbing. We pinched some of these Reds and worked 'em over in the cellar. I felt better in the afternoon but my stomach is so upset this morning I don't know if I can eat the Communion breakfast at the Holy Name Society. If I throw up while the Mayor is speaking I'm going to take it out on these Reds the next time they have a demonstration. They're just the scum of the earth. That's what the Mirror says and this fellow Moley who's so close to Roosevelt says they're always provoking us cops. They're always talking about the rights of workers and they ir-iri-irritate our human impulses, this guy Moley says."

The trend of the class struggle, even if we take the events of only the last month, gives the lie to the "incitement of violence" in strikes and demonstration by Communists as charged by Moley. The stubborn battles of the Pacific Coast longshoremen, seamen and their sympathizers, of the Minneapolis and Toledo workers, of metal miners in Montana and Alabama, etc., against attacks of professional strikebreakers, police, troops and special bodies of armed men recruited by the employers and their organizations, show that American workers instinctively resent and resist such attacks—as they have every right to and will continue to do. Communists are often able to aid workers in organizing more effective defense but it is not necessary to "incite" American workers to defend themselves and their organizations in bitter class battles.

What about provocation of workers by police and the private armies of the employers? As this is written, the New York Sun says under a Gary, Ind., date line:

"Reserve police, deputy sheriffs and private guards were mobilized throughout the Indiana-Illinois steel district today in preparation for a strike . . . Army cots have been set up in all the nine plants in the district and union men said huge truck loads of groceries and arms have been stored in warehouses . . . Extra searchlights were mounted atop buildings commanding views of the huge, barbed-wire enclosed yards.

"Hundreds of strange faces on downtown streets gave credibility to the rumors that companies have imported their own guards from Chicago, Detroit and Cleveland. One hotel revealed that every vacant room was reserved by a large plant."

We repeat that this is the organization of *civil war* against workers—*it proceeds without interference by and with the knowledge and consent of Moley's chief, Roosevelt.* It is provocation on a huge scale, carried on openly while William Green, A. F. of L. president, Mike Tighe, A. A. head, a horde of federal "conciliators" and other upholders of such a sacred American custom and institution as organized strikebreaking and union disruption in the face of the enemy, descend upon the steel workers' special convention in Pittsburgh in a final effort, capping weeks of previous attempts, to demoralize the workers from the inside. The steel companies and the Roosevelt administration have used the treacheries and corruption of A. F. of L. officialdom to discredit not only the A. A. but to discredit the *idea* of union organization independent of the companies.

What about the habitual mobilization of big forces of armed foot and mounted police which surround all workers' outdoor meetings and demonstrations? This is also provocation and it was the practice in the United States forty years before the organization of the Communist Party!

It is all done in the name of protection of profits, property rights—the fundamental tenet of capitalism. The list of police officers who have lost their lives in attacks on workers can be counted on the fingers of one hand, but the list of American workers and workers' leaders murdered by police and hired gangsters in ordinary struggles for a better living and more security from want is longer than the recent parade in the Hudson of the war fleet of Wall Street, praised to the skies by Roosevelt, blessed and prayed for by the cardinals of Christ.

The influence of the Communist Party is growing among workers. Moley would not attack it otherwise. The Communists, with the aid of big sections of industrial workers, fighting farmers, and sympathetic intellectuals, will be able to withstand and defeat the new

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police offensive and the special suppressive legislation now being planned. We have confidence in the American masses—in these *new masses* moving forward in battle array against the enemy center—N.R.A. and its program of hunger, suppression, and imperialist war.

In 1918, 16 years ago, during one of the darkest moments of the proletarian revolution, Lenin addressed a letter* to the American working-class. Unlike Moley, Lenin knew the lessons of American revolutionary history. Unlike Moley, Lenin knew the revolutionary traditions of the American working-class. He wrote:

"The American people has a revolutionary tradition adopted by the best representatives of the American proletariat, who gave repeated expression to their full solidarity with us, the Bolsheviks. This tradition is the war of liberation against the English in the 18th and the Civil War in the 19th Century. If we are to take only into consideration the 'destruction' of some branches of industry and national economy, America in 1870 was in some respects behind 1860. But what a pedant, what an idiot he is who denies on such grounds the greatest, world-historic, progressive and revolutionary significance of the American Civil War of 1861-65!

"Representatives of the bourgeoisie understand that it was worth letting the country go through long years of civil war . . . for the . . . overthrow of Negro slavery and . . . the rule of the slave owners . . . But now, when we are confronted with the vastly greater task of the overthrow of capitalist *wage* slavery and the overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie . . . the representatives and defenders of the bourgeoisie, as well as the social reformists . . . cannot understand and do not want to understand the necessity and legality of civil war. . . . The American workers will not follow the bourgeoisie. . . The whole history of the world and the American labor movement strengthens my conviction . . . Let the bourgeoisie be brutal to the true internationalists; the greater the obduracy and bestiality it displays, the nearer comes the day of the victorious proletarian revolution. . . .

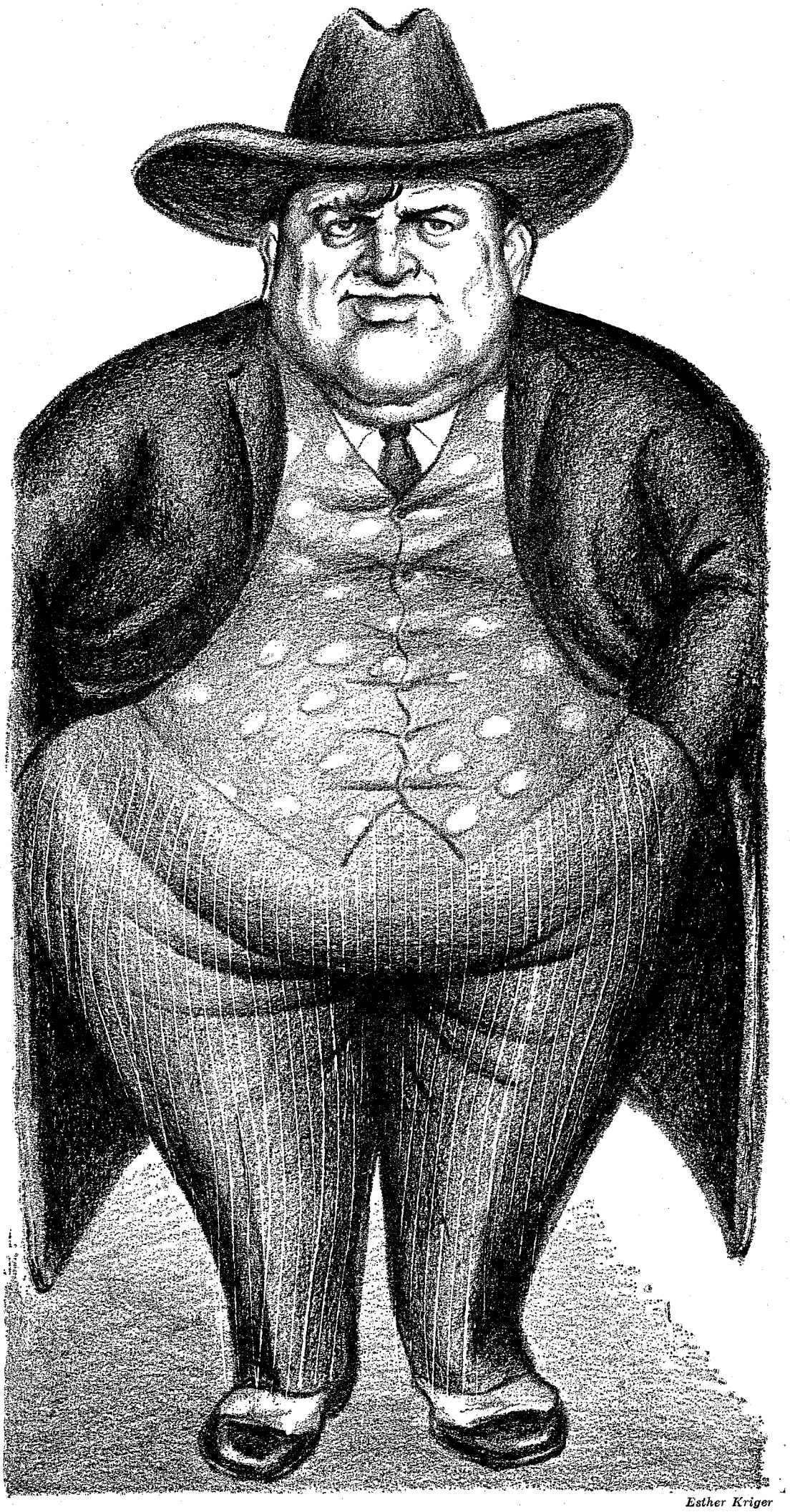
"We know that the fierce resistance of the bourgeoisie to the Socialist revolution is inevitable in all countries and that it will *grow* with the growth of this revolution. The proletariat will crush this resistance; it will definitely mature to victory and power in the course of struggle against the resisting bourgeoisie. . . .

"The workers sever connections with their social-traitors—the Gomperses, Hendersons, Renaudels, Scheidmanns, Remers. *The workers are going slowly, but unswervingly, toward Communist Bolshevik tactics toward the proletarian revolution which is the only one capable of saving perishing culture and perishing mankind.*

"In a word, we are invincible, because the world proletarian revolution is invincible."

This is *our* view of the course of the class

* International Publishers—5 cents.



Esther Kriger

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struggle in the United States and of its final outcome, Messrs. LaGuardia, O'Ryan, and Raymond Moley—provocateur-in-chief to the Roosevelt regime and its program for herding the working-class into the starvation stockade of monopoly capital and the shambles of imperialist war! Moley's program, and the provocations of his pupil, the Mirror of the gutters of capitalism, is for Today, ours is for today —*and tomorrow.*

Furthermore, having charted correctly from the beginning the course which N.R.A. would follow, we venture to make another prediction: The twilight which enveloped Woodrow Wilson and his "New Freedom" will seem like high noon in the Sahara desert compared to the darkness which will, much sooner than many expect, descend upon the "New Deal" and its coterie of college professors and military officers who make up most of its apparatus. Red baiting will not prevent the coming debacle.

Death of a Bill

ARTHUR KALLET

WHEN W. B. Thompson, patent medicine lawyer, rose to address the Senate committee holding hearings on the Tugwell Food and Drugs Bill last December, the audience laughed. Everyone knows what kind of quacks sell patent medicines. And here was their spokesman come to tell the Senate what to do about drug control legislation!

But the grave, attentive members of the Committee on Commerce did not laugh. They knew what the audience did not know: the patent medicine manufacturers also own Congress. And because Mr. Thompson and his colleagues wished it, the Tugwell Food and Drugs Bill, or rather the pale, emasculated version of it adequately described as the Copeland Bill, died with the passing of the present session of Congress.

Between the early error of the Roosevelt administration in believing that vileness and disreputability made the medicine industry an easy sacrifice to reform, and the unwept demise of the Copeland Bill through the failure of Congress to take action on it, is the old story of capitalist government heralding its noble intent to protect the victims of the system and ending by protecting the system against the victims.

The original Tugwell Bill was written about a year ago by two earnest law professors intent on keeping within the safe limits of the Constitution, convinced that duty required them to write a bill acceptable to Congress (not realizing, perhaps, that this could be done only by those whom their bill would define as criminals), and depending for technical aid on the politicians heading the Federal food and drug administration. The bill they wrote was, to be sure, far better than the law which now provides delightful sport for food and drug industry lawyers. It extended governmental control to cosmetics and to food, drug, and cosmetic advertising, now uncontrolled except for occasional flurries on the part of the Federal Trade Commission intent on preventing trade from falling below the accepted level of dishonesty.

The bill provided for the establishment of grades for foods, similar to grade A and grade B for milk and eggs, so that a purchaser could correctly estimate a third-rate product advertised as "high-grade" or "vastly superior." It would have required, also, the listing on labels of names and quantities of all active ingredients of medicines. This would have given warning of the presence of harmful ingredients and at the same time averted some thousands of marvelous scientific discoveries "perfected after years of painstaking research." But after taking three steps forward, the law professors retreated two and a half by leaving broad powers in the hands of the same old government bureaucrats and courts[1] whose pleasant relations with the poisoners-for-profit had broken the few remaining teeth of the present law.

But despite this retreat there was the appearance of a serious threat to many large corporations profiting from grossly false advertising for products either relatively worthless in the light of advertised claims, or actually dangerous to health or to life. Since the bill was announced as an administration measure, then to the administration must go the credit for the inspired act of having the bill sponsored and placed before the Senate by Dr. Royal S. Copeland, the only senator openly employed to aid in the fake advertising of such companies.

The bill was introduced in the Senate last June, and since its intent was ostensibly to protect health, it was referred to the Committee on Commerce; since, more particularly, it was intended to protect consumers against fake advertising for food and drug products, the bill was properly turned over to a subcommittee headed by the senator with intimate first-hand knowledge of fake advertising, and a wide acquaintance with fake advertisers to whom he could turn with confidence for advice.

With the introduction of the bill, the public-relations forces of the threatened industries went into action, along with their hired help, the newspaper and magazine publishers. Fervent editorials in a thousand papers denouncing the Tugwell bill made it clear that a medicine man with a large advertising budget can control the press as well as any Hitler. Public spirited editorial writers everywhere discovered simultaneously that a hundred million Americans were about to be deprived of the sacred right of choosing their own nostrums, that every drugstore and drug manufacturing plant was about to be closed down and their employes reduced to starvation as part of a communist plot, and that Mr. Tugwell wished to burn down "the house" to catch a few rats in the attic.

To maintain the forms, hearings on the bill were held by the Copeland sub-committee last December, after some months of continual conferences between Dr. Copeland and his friends. Those who had been giving the Senator instructions privately now recited in public hour after hour what their sales departments needed in the public interest. Just before the hearings closed, the sub-committee was embarrassed to discover that there were consumers present who felt that the bill in some way concerned them. These outsiders were graciously given a few minutes each to state what they had on their minds.

The bill was then revised by Dr. Copeland and reintroduced in the Senate early in January. One of the best sections of the original bill was gone, that declaring, "An advertisement of a food, drug, or cosmetic shall be deemed to be false if in any particular it is untrue, or by ambiguity or inference creates a misleading impression regarding such food, drug, or cosmetic." In its place was an ingenious definition of false advertising that would make acceptable "any representation concerning any effect of a drug if that representation is supported by substantial medical opinion or by demonstrable scientific facts," both substantial medical opinion and demonstrable scientific facts being purchasable in neat packages by any advertiser with a few thousand dollars in spare change. What a boon to Dr. Copeland's employer of the moment, the Fleischmann Yeast Company, whose famous foreign specialist testimonializers fairly shriek respectability despite the fact that even hardened advertising copy writers flinch over Fleischmann copy!

Deleted also was the excellent section requiring the naming of ingredients on medicine labels as well as the provision for voluntary inspection of plants and products at the expense of the producer. This latter section had been particularly objectionable to Dr. Copeland's good friends because, presumably, it would have permitted small competitors actually to *prove* claims for their products, this being, of course, unfair competition.

Despite these and many other alterations, however, the food, drug, cosmetic, advertising, and publishing industries were still dissatisfied; the new bill was not quite as generous as the existing law. Dr. Copeland was promptly made aware of this fact, and soon he submitted another revision to his friends. In this version, the provision for grading—pet hate of

[1] Justice Robb, brother of Clinton Robb, counsel for the United Medicine Manufacturers of America ruled that a horse liniment sold as a tuberculosis cure was not a case requiring drastic action.

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the advertisers and publishers who saw grades being substituted for national brands—disappeared.

Since his friends were still not entirely satisfied with his efforts on their behalf, further changes were called for. To make the desired changes appear the result of open-minded deliberation, another public hearing was held by the Commerce Committee, beginning in the closing days of February.[1] Again the bill was revised, the principal recipients of favors this time being the quack medicine boys headed by Lawyer Thompson. The bill had contained a proviso making it a crime to advertise patent medicines for cancer, tuberculosis, diabetes, and 40 or so other diseases for many of which self-medication is fatal. This particular proviso as it appeared in early versions of the bill was so clear and definitive and so easily enforced that its elimination was probably inevitable. Where other provisions annoying to important interests might be brushed aside in private conferences with considerate officials or in nice arguments before obliging courts, it would indeed take an ingenious lawyer to find loopholes in this bald declaration: " . . . *any* advertisement of a drug representing it directly or by ambiguity or inference to have *any* effect in the treatment of *any* of the following diseases shall be deemed to be false . . ."

The deletion of this section and other changes made by Dr. Copeland and his committee were pleasing to the Senator's friends in the food and drug industries, but were not quite sufficient. Profits of several hundred percent per annum are not uncommon in the medicine business, and with such profits to protect, it is best to let well enough alone. In other words, to have the Tugwell-Copeland Bill die. So it is dead.

Should the bill be revived in the next session of Congress and come up for debate and amendment at the hands of the individual members of the House and the Senate, it is easy to foretell what kind of bill will result, if one reads a proviso inserted in the Tugwell-Copeland Bill in behalf of Senator Johnson of California who wished to preserve for his state's citrus growers the right to cheat the buyers of citrus fruits by coloring the fruits artificially: "Nothing in this Act shall be construed to prohibit the enhancement of the color of mature and wholesome (oh yeah?—A.K.) citrus fruit to the variegated color thereof, by means harmless to the consumer of such fruits, *nor to require any declaration of such enhancement by labeling or otherwise.*" (Italics not in bill.)

[1] That such hearings serve their purpose is evident from the testimony of James Rorty, speaking as a former advertising copy writer but present at the hearings as correspondent for The Nation. Said he, ". . . I am impressed by the earnestness and intelligence with which the committee has undertaken its task, and its apparent desire to serve the public interest as opposed to selfish commercial interests." And The Nation editorially called Copeland a physician sincerely interested in protecting the public health and the public pocketbook, prophesying, with its keen understanding of legislative processes, that there would be no further changes in the bill because of the excellent defense of its provisions presented at the hearings by the chief of the Food and Drug Administration.

Danse Macabre

(*After Leonov's* Sot)

EDITH HART

Uvadiev clapped on his head the chill circlets
of the earphones:

Out of the silence
Out of the night
Came sound
In cataclysm
Came speed
In swirling drones.

Uvadiev fumbled with the tiny dial, his fingers
tense:

Gay music . . .
Germany is dancing—
Germany bleeding from war-wounds;
Aha! France comes dancing
With 33 percent expense
And 18 for new defense.
"Suspense

And everywhere the spring is tight coiled quivering for release":

Greece! Rumania;
England dancing
With 44 percent for debts
10 to keep the maimed alive
14 to buy better guns next time;
In Daventry
Gloomy unemployed ex-colonels
Blow jazz into big brass horns;
Negroes are softly singing in Toulouse.

"Glued together in couples the whole mad
world is dancing,"

To the *Internationale!*
Bridled by frivolity
And harnessed to the rhythmic scraping
Of patent leather shoes—
To the song that had made strong
The hungry feet of Revolution,
To the song they had died singing
"Dancing!

Mustard gas is creeping on them as they
whirl and careen" . . .

Into the silence
Of the night
He fled.
Sleepy smoke hung low on the river
And all about him towered fretted steel
Like winter trees against the moon,
The factory was still.
"More to be done tomorrow
And tomorrow!"
And with his tired hands
He stroked the warm flank
Of the great machine.

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Literary Wars in the U. S. S. R.

IV: *Smugglers of Reaction in Soviet Letters*

JOSHUA KUNITZ

IN THE struggle for self-definition and self-assertion on the cultural front, the proletariat's cardinal task, at first, was the detection and suppression of counter-revolutionary propaganda. A classic early example of such propaganda in fiction was the novel *We* whose author, Zamiatin, has achieved considerable fame as far back as 1910. Zamiatin's first book published after the revolution was *The Islanders*—a clever satire on English philistinism. In the period of War Communism he wrote a series of vaguely subversive stories depicting the degeneration of the bourgeois intellectuals — also islanders — besieged by the forces of the risen proletariat. In 1920--21 he produced *We*, which the Soviet censor, after several years of deliberation, refused to pass, but which found its way, in manuscript, to Europe and America, where it was finally translated and published, but where it deservedly failed to atract any attention.

The novel's title was intended as irony. *We* whose author, Zamiatin, had achieved conearly poetry of the revolution. As an antithesis to the bourgeois first person singular, the proletariat then thought, spoke and sang the first person plural. *"We* the countless, redoubtable legions of toil!" *We* everywhere! *We* everything! On the other hand, the petty bourgeois ego, driven like a mouse into its hole, peeped out upon the tumultuous world of the surging masses and worried and fretted. Before long its resentment and humiliation crystallized into a kind of grandeur mania; the petty bourgeois ego began to visualize itself as the only carrier of individuality, uniqueness, inimitableness. Coupled with that went its impotent hatred for the mass—that vast, undifferentiated, self-perpetuating "something-in-gray." The crushed bourgeois *I*, isolated from life, sought compensation in sneers at the victorious *WE*.

Zamiatin's novel purported to be a projection into the future socialist commonwealth, when everything would be based on reason, on science, on mathematics. Under socialism, during the reign of science and reason, man, according to Zamiatin, would lose his individuality, would lose his name and his volition. People would wear the same clothes—gray tunics (the color is symbolical!); instead of names, people would carry numbers—males, even numbers; females, odd numbers, and they would all eat, drink, sleep, work, play, and even have sex relations at exactly the same time; A bell would ring, and the young anonymous lovers would draw the shade and go to bed! Everything would run smoothly. There would be no unemployment no sickness, no worry. Everything would be based on measurements and numbers—on two and two is four. But, says Zamiatin, man is not only reason. What about emotions? What about instincts? And suppose man takes it into his head to rebel; to assert *himself*, his *I*, *against* science, *against* reason, *against* organization, *against* security? Suppose, just for the devil of it, he, like Dostoievsky's man from the Underground, decides to operate on the premise that two and two is five? Suppose he asserts that man's greatest good is insecurity, suffering and pain? And Zamiatin shows what would happen. The elaborate socialist structure would crumble. Reason would be overthrown. Emotion, color, individuality would be restored. *I* would finally triumph over *We*.

Thus did the dethroned bourgeoisie try to soothe its injured pride. He laughs best who laughs last, it seemed to say. Since reason and science and technology and the whole trend of contemporary history was in favor of the proletariat, the disarmed petty bourgeoisie tried to find consolation in claiming for itself the realm of emotion. These detractors of the machine themselves became unabashedly mechanistic in artificially separating emotion from reason, in artificially posing one against the other. This dualism of "I" versus "We," of emotion versus reason, rather than reflecting an inevitable split in man's psyche, simply reflected the bivalence of petty bourgeois psychology, the equivocal position of the middle classes in the overlapping of two historical epochs. In a well-integrated classless society, the individual ego will not be pitted against society, but will find its highest expression in functioning harmoniously with society. The creative personality of the genuinely musical person finds its complete musical fulfilment in a happy fusion with the other musicians of the orchestra. The whole problem of society based on reason and the collective as opposed to emotion and the individual is so unreal that one need not dwell on it much longer.

Needless to say, this negative conception of the socialist "utopia" was not wholly original with Zamiatin. The fear of the machine, of science, of positivism, of rationalism, of collectivism had been expressed infinitely more compellingly by other petty-bourgeois writers in Russia and elsewhere. In his earliest struggles against socialist and positivist thought, Dostoievsky, in his *Notes from the Underground,* had posed these problems so challenglengingly that he has scarcely been excelled by any of his successors. In his pre-Communist days, the Russian symbolist Valerii Briusov wrote a story *The Republic of the Southern Cross* in which precisely the same problem was raised. The solution in that unhappy land came through an infectious disease called "contrariness." The disease spread rapidly, and the once ideal rational state collapsed. Fear of the robot and and dynamo is not the creation of Zamiatin.

It should also be pointed out that of all the books written on this subject, Zamiatin's is the least convincing and the most boring. To make a sociological thesis about schematic people interesting or even fair reading is too much of a task even for the greatest of writers. And Zamiatin in certainly not among the greatest. The most charitable thing one can say about *We* is that it is an unmitigated bore. Small wonder that *We,* despite its anti-Communist message, failed to create the slightest ripple on literary currents in Europe and America.

Recently, Zamiatin's still-born and deeply-buried work was disinterred in this country by the enterprising Max Eastman—our native model of the "hidden foe . . . who re-incarnates in various forms" and who, "behind a solid barricade of revolutionary phrases," carries on his persistent counter-revolutionary fire. Since my subject in this article is the smuggling of reaction in revolutionary literature, a brief analysis of Mr. Eastman's method as applied to Zamiatin might be instructive. Casting to the winds his often reaffirmed esthetic standards and aversion for "propaganda," Eastman, for obvious reasons, unblushingly pronounces Zamiatin's tenth-rate "romance" a "recklessly imaginative book" possessed of a great "depth of feeling . . . evidently the heart-spoken message of a man of poetry who has delved deeply in science." Eastman does not say to whom the message was addressed. He assures us, however, that "there is not a counter-revolutionary line in it." Zamiatin (according to Eastman) merely pondered "the larger destinies of man"; he merely wanted "to say something about what is to come *after* the technique of capitalist machine-industry has been taken over by a successful proletarian revolution and developed to the full," he merely wondered about "the unhappy situation of poetic people in that complete regimentation of life toward which science seems to lead the way." Not a mention of the real motivation of the novel; not a suggestion as to its anti-collectivist, anti-socialist, counter-revolutionary class character. Just "the heart-spoken message of a man of poetry who has delved deeply in science!"

In characterizing Zamiatin, Eastman takes great pains to draw an aura of revolutionary

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martyrdom around him. This to emphasize the obtuseness and ingratitude of the proletarian dictatorship. Zamiatin, he reminds us, had spent a term in prison during the 1905 revolution; he had been "a working Bolshevik" when most of those who subsequently denounced him in the name of the "Bolshevik creative line" were still in school. This happens to be true. So was Eastman once associated with the revolutionary movement. But times change and people change. In Zamiatin's own words: "Einstein, watching motion with a watch in his hand, is also in motion." The impulsive generosity and idealism of a youth often evaporates before the first sprinkling of silver hair appears on his temples. Max Eastman, once sympathetic to the revolutionary movement, is now opposed to it. However, his chief stock in trade, like that of all renegades, is his former revolutionism. This is what makes his literary wares so "authoritative," so "authentic" to his bourgeois patrons. He still loves to parade as a revolutionist, to bandy revolutionary phrases. Indeed, if we accept his word for it, he is the only person who keeps in step with the revolution, all the other people, those who organize themselves into revolutionary groups to fight fascism, defend the Soviet Union, agitate for the release of political prisoners, struggle for Negro rights, battle in the mines, in the factories, on the picket line, those who join the Communist Party or its allied organizations are out of step. Eastman has become so used to invoke his "revolutionary" past as a screen for his counter-revolutionary present, that he, by sheer force of habit, applies the same technique to Zamiatin. He conveniently forgets to mention that Zamiatin in 1920 was not the Zamiatin of 1905! "Zamiatin's heresy consists essentially in loving dispassionate reflection, and believing in the value of heresy as such. . . . Zamiatin's crime was that he kept his intellectual independence and moral integrity. He refused as an artist to take orders from a political autocracy." In short, Zamiatin was a saint, and *We* his *"magnum opus."*

It happens that Max Eastman has very little first hand knowledge of Soviet literature. His sources are mostly second hand: *Literature and Revolution* by Leon Trotsky and *Outline of the literary Movement of the Revolutionary Epoch* by Viacheslav Polonsky. He also mentions V. Saianov's *Contemporary Literary Groupings* as a book to which he is "much indebted . . . for general information presented from the point-of-view of the bureaucracy." Besides these, he makes reference to the Trotskyite critic Voronsky; though there is not much evidence that he has read much of Voronsky. Throughout his *Artists in Uniform* Eastman paraphrases and quotes these authorities unconscionably. Now let us see what his authorities say about Zamiatin.

Saianov's classification of Zamiatin as a bourgeois writer may be dismissed, since Saianov was a member of the RAPP and therefore represented the "point-of-view of the bureaucracy." But Trotsky, the literary Menshevik who, according to Eastman, "speaks for art's own laws," is even more devastating than Saianov. In speaking of the literary Opiskins (Foma Fomich Opiskin, one of the most detestable characters in Dostoievsky's works) Trotsky mentions Zamiatin in the same breath with such avowed counter-revolutionists and monarchists as Bunin, Merzhkovsky, Zinaida Hippius, and others. Judged by his discussion, Trotsky had not at that time read *We*. His evaluation of Zamiatin is obviously based on the latter's more innocuous published works. Speaking of the Zamiatin type, Trotsky says:

> But from time to time they relieve their souls by secretly thumbing their noses. . . . The master of this whole group is Zamiatin, the author of *The Islanders*. . . . After all, the author is an "islander" himself, and lives on a very small island at that, to which he migrated from the present Russia. And whether Zamiatin writes about the Russians in London, or about the English in Leningrad, he himself undoubtedly remains an *internal émigré* [our emphasis]. By his somewhat strained style, in which he expresses his particular literary gentlemanliness (bordering on snobbism), Zamiatin is as if cut out to be a teacher to groups of young, enlightened and sterile "islanders."*

And "the most talented and cultured of Soviet critics," Viacheslav Polonsky, he who, according to Eastman, "struggled heroically, and with a fine, clear stubbornness of mind, to hold some genuine thought of art and culture up out of this Stalin swamp," he too exposes the bourgeois reactionary tendencies in Zamiatin's *published* works. Polonsky is ironical about "this Russian dandy's . . . literary snobbism." He bitterly attacks Zamiatin's article *I Fear,* in which Zamiatin maintained that Soviet Russia would "never have a genuine literature," because "a genuine literature can exist only when it is being created, not by trustworthy executive officials, but by madmen, hermits, heretics, dreamers, rebels, skeptics." In Soviet Russia, opined Zamiatin, "a writer can do only one of two things: he can either become a Breshkovsky [a prolific official hack under the Czar] or remain silent." In his reply, Polonsky, after pointing to the galaxy of colorful and profound writers that appeared "within a couple of years" in Soviet letters, says:

> What is it that has instilled such pessimism and fear in E. Zamiatin? Too much "disturbance" and "destruction." Alexander Blok once ecstatically defined this disturbance — "Wind, wind in the whole God's world." One would think that this is just the time for the "madmen, the heretic Scythians" to exult—here is an epoch that flings aside "moderation" and "punctiliousness!" But exactly the opposite is taking place. The "Scythians and madmen" are in the lead of those who, not wishing to be disturbed, are pulling back, never indicating the slightest inclination to follow the path of negating the yesterday.

In the book Polonsky makes six references to Zamiatin, and each one of these references links that author with some reactionary trend in Soviet letters.

Voronsky's Fight for the Truth is the title of one of the chapters in Eastman's *Artists in Uniform.* Unfortunately, when it comes to evaluating Zamiatin, Voronsky also dons the "uniform." In his early essays in the Krasnaia Nov, this Trotskyite critic minces no words in denouncing that bourgeois writer's reactionary influence.

Yes, even a critic like Victor Shklovsky, a formalist eternally at odds with the Marxists and the sworn enemy of the RAPP, says in his essay on Zamiatin that, after all, "the world of unsuccessful socialism created by Zamiatin is a world created after Zamiatin's method."

In short, it has been the consensus that Zamiatin is a bourgeois writer definitely inimical to the revolution and the proletarian state. When Eastman, therefore, extolls Zamiatin's love for "dispassionate reflection" and belief in "the value of heresy," he is being deliberately disingenuous. "Dispassionate" perhaps in the sense of not caring who destroys the revolution. "Heretical" perhaps in the sense of propagating reactionary ideas upheld by the embattled bourgeoisie in over five-sixths of the globe.

Of course, there is no line in the book advocating armed insurrection against the dictatorship of the proletariat. That would be a little too crude. What Zamiatin tried to smuggle in was something to undermine the enthusiasm and faith of the revolutionary armies. Recall: the book was written in 1920. Russia was then not yet free from Civil War and foreign invasion. There were unspeakable suffering and hunger. The one thing that sustained the proletariat in those difficult months was faith in the Revolution, in Socialism. And Zamiatin's melancholy refrain about the vanity of the proletariat's struggle for Socialism and science was scarcely disguised counter-revolution. The wonder is that the censor hesitated so long; that no serious steps were taken against Zamiatin; that he continued to write, and publish, and teach in higher institutions of learning; that he remained, till 1929, one of the heads of Union of Russian Writers, that he still lives, and prospers, and travels in foreign lands.

The "framing" of Zamiatin that Eastman makes so much of, I shall have occasion to discuss in my article on the RAPP. Here I chose Zamiatin as a fairly typical example of what was going on in the Right wing of Soviet letters. As against the proletarian emphasis on creative affirmation, on trust in the senses and in reason, on collective effort and individual discipline, bourgeois writers like Zamiatin, as well as some of the fellow-travelers under the influence of the bourgeoisie, seemed to revel in negation, scepticism, irony, irrationalism, anti-social individualism.

Observe, for instance, the difference between a typically proletarian and a typically bourgeois reaction to the same objective situation—the inauguration of the New Economic Policy. Gladkov's *Cement* illustrates the first; Ilya Ehrenbourg's *Racketeer,* the second.

The historic moment presented in *Cement* is the spring and summer of 1921, the days of the first faltering attempts at economic rehabilitation after the civil war. Poverty, hunger,

* Trotsky himself as a smuggler of reaction in literature will be discussed in the article on RAPP.

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disease, lack of faith among many of the workers, sabotaging tactics on the part of the few remaining "bourgeois" specialists, bureaucracy in the most responsible offices of the Communist Party—these are some of the main obstacles which Gleb Chumalov, the central character of the novel, encounters in his mighty efforts to rebuild the cement factory. Needless to say, Gleb finally emerges victorious, the scene of his great triumph being the celebration of the reopening of the factory.

Gleb's victory on the economic front is somewhat spoiled by his partial defeat on the "domestic front." He reestablishes the old factory; he fails to reestablish the old family. With the death of their only child, his wife leaves him in order that she may function unhampered as a free woman and a consecrated Communist. Yet even here Greb is only partly beaten, for he finally succeeds in transcending the atavistic emotion of jealousy. In the exultation at the restarting of the works, he forgets his bitter hatred for the man who had once possessed Dasha. The moment is glorious — enmities are hushed, jealousies waved aside, doubts resolved in a splendid outburst of comradely enthusiasm. The two erstwhile antagonists shake hands. The personal is merged in the general, the individual in the social.

The proletarian Gladkov is fully aware of the possibly perilous consequences of the NEP ("We are going to be subjected to a dreadful trial, worse than civil war, ruin, famine and blockade. We're in the presence of a hidden foe who is not going to shoot us, but will spread before us all the charms and temptations of capitalist business. . . ."), yet he prefers to strike the major key. He is confidently communist. The difficulties are there, but they are being overcome. The wheels of industry are started, and in the process both Gleb and Dasha emerge as emancipated social beings, finding their greatest joy in submerging their egos in the common good. Psychologically, at least, the NEP is beaten.

Now let us turn to Ehrenbourg's picaresque novel *Racketeer,* the story of the mischievous, abandoned, egotistical rake Mikhail Lykov.* During the Civil War, Mikhail joins the Communist party and performs great deeds of valor and self-sacrifice. Later, however, in the atmosphere of post-war speculation and chicanery, he rapidly degenerates into a grab-all, get-rich-quick profiteer who finally falls into the clutches of the OGPU and is shot as a speculator and traitor.

Characteristically, the then remote fellow-traveler Ehrenbourg, in dealing with the NEP, insists on striking a minor, defeatist note. Each one stresses what he is predisposed to stress, Soviet reality supplying sufficient material for both. Indeed in his treatment of the Nepman Mikhail Lykov, Ehrenbourg, a writer pandering to the tastes of the philistine sections of Russian society, cannot help revealing an unconscious or perhaps even a deliberately veiled sympathy for his supremely individualistic hero. In a pseudo-elegiac vein, he laments the ebb of the collective impulse of the revolution, the "inevitable" rebellion of the ego, the colorful, sparkling, irridescent ego against the grey uniformity and pedestrian virtue of the herd. He pretends to be outraged when, upon entering the glittering chambers of a sumptuous café, he espies waiters in frock-coats. The frock-coat, elevated into a universal symbol, evokes the following caustic diatribe from the author:

> Frock coats! Have you ever stopped to think, my worthy readers, actors in a grandiose epic, Party members as well as non-Party citizens, you who are giving a good deal of your time to pondering the problems of the World Revolution and the coming proletarian culture, of the inhabitability of Mars and similar weighty questions, have you ever stopped to consider the fate of these masquarade outfits, these avian costumes indispensible to diplomats and waiters, have you ever stopped to consider the cryptic language of their absurd tails? They had disappeared in 1917 together with other things, big things and little things, together with the "populism" of the intelligentsia, with the amateurish "five o'clock teas" at Trumblès, with the feuilletons in the Russkoe Slovo, with the territorial pathos of Russia "one and indivisible." Four years have passed, and what years, O readers! How much unprecedented heroism, madness, bestiality, and rascality! How many glorious ideas born and put to death! There were the unforgettable radio messages to Chicherin and the battles for Perekop, and hundreds of thousands of children's graves; there was faith and pain and death. Who ever thought then of frock coats? It seemed that everything had been torn up to the very navel of the earth, everything tilled anew, and not a tree left of the old. And one (shall I say beautiful or horrible? better say "humdrum") and one humdrum morning a puny little decree appeared, just a few lines under the heading "Acts and Decrees of the Government of the R.S.F.S.R." and immediately from the bowels of the earth, there arose miraculously these living corpses, more enduring than numerous other big and little things. No one knows how they had spent these years, how, hidden from strangers' eyes, they had bided their time, confident that sooner or later they certainly would be needed. They had not been converted into dusty rags or into scarecrows. Having carefully folded their tails, they have outwaited the madness and the inspiration. They made their appearance when a few lines granted them amnesty. Gentle readers, in your childhood days you must have certainly learned that the spherical shape of our planet may be established by one rather tiring experiment. If you leave the town of Kaluga and advance eastward you are bound, yes, you are finally bound to come back to the very same Kaluga, only from the west. Is it possible then that you can look at frock coats with equanimity? Is it possible that you cannot understand the anger that raised the arms of our hero?

The proletariat was fighting a decisive historical battle. The fate of the revolution was in the balance. And here comes Ehrenbourg who, looking ruefully at the scene, shakes his wise, wise head and sighs: Ah these deranged people whose discussions about the world revolution and proletarian culture are as relevant as a discussion about the inhabitability of Mars. After all, there is no progress. Do what you will, we are bound to come back where we started from. It's sad. It certainly is sad. But that's the way life is!

But Ehrenbourg was not unique in this attitude. The way to undermine the fighting spirit of the proletariat is constantly to suggest the futility of struggle, of sacrifice, of enthusiastic endeavor. One method of doing it is to shed bitter tears over the failure of the Communist idea. "Where are the dreams of yesteryear?" wail the middle-class writers. Gone. . . . Vanished. . . . "Our" dream has turned into a nightmare; "our" heroes into Nepmen, speculators, bureaucrats. Human nature, depraved, selfish, possessive human nature, has won a rueful victory.

Remote fellow travelers, like Ehrenbourg, Alexei Tolstoy, Zoshchenko, Panteleimon Romanov—all on the Right of Soviet letters —shed oceans of sizzling tears. According to them, the past had not begun to disappear. Russia, "fat-rumped" Russia, had been scarcely ruffled by the mighty Revolution. It has merely become more vulgar, more callous, more cynical. Everywhere—frock coats, tips, servants, lip-stick, fox trots, gambling, philistine pleasures, Main Street occupations, rubber plants, geraniums, canaries, sunflower seeds, faded family portraits, petty savings, petty pride, obsequiousness, sycophancy, wire-pulling, dirt, meanness, squalor. "If you leave the town of Kaluga and advance eastward you are bound, yes, you are finally bound to come back to the very same Kaluga, only from the West."

An amusing episode comes to mind. It was in one of the cheaper playhouses in New York. As is usual in such theatres, the play dealt with a widow and orphan and a noble friend, and was subjects calculated to play on the easily touched sensibilities of a petty-bourgeois audience. It seemed that the playwright, the producer, the actors and the orchestra had all conspired to wring the last tear from the sentimental folk who crowded the house. In front of us sat a rather oversized woman, cracking peanuts, sucking oranges, and blowing her nose quite lugubriously into her handkerchief. We were a group of sophisticated youngsters and the forced sentimentality of the play seemed to us funny. At the most tragic moments we would nudge one another and titter. Finally the lady with the peanuts and oranges and lachrymose nose could stand it no longer. Turning to us a face drenched with tears, she sobbed: "Why don't you let me enjoy the play?" She, poor soul, had come to weep. And she would let no one rob her of the pleasure.

The same with the tearful petty bourgeois writers. Communist remonstrances that their tears were idle, their laments vain, that the revolution was hail and hearty and was forging successfully ahead were of small avail. These gentlemen had come to witness a tragedy and they would not be robbed of the pleasure of weeping. They, like the fly-by-night revolutionists once connected with the Menorah Journal and like the Max Eastmans and Calvertons around the Modern Monthly, were resolved to remain disconsolate.

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*Ilya Ehrenbourg's evolution from the extreme right to his present position of unqualified acceptance of the Revolution, as well as the development of other writers of the same category, will be discussed in another article.

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Correspondence

A Salute to Hicks

To The New Masses:

The pseudo-critical blasts leveled by some authors against Granville Hicks' seven articles on *Revolution and the Novel* appear to originate largely in personal irritation and bias-cramped minds. As one revolutionary fiction writer, I wish to express my gratitude to Hicks for his pioneering work in that series. With many of our novelists floundering in dimly perceived bogs of technique (witness the confession of Robert Cantwell, one of the sneerers at Hicks' series, that *The Land of Plenty* suffers from his own inability to solve completely the problem of strikers seizing a factory: the satisfying expression of which would have been not only a political and imaginative but also a technical problem), we needed a Hicks to analyze the craftsmanship conclusions of Edwin Muir and Percy Lubbock in a revolutionary laboratory. On the whole, Hicks did an illuminating job in probing for class effects not desired or unperceived by those bourgeois students of fiction.

The series completely contradicts Edward Dahlberg's carping assertion, "The problems confronting the poet and the novelist, the creative dilemma and the very processes involved in writing, he [Hicks] is either not interested in or does not comprehend."

As for the lip curling of James T. Farrell, Josephine Herbst and to some extent Myra Page that Hicks irrelevantly tried to pass out themes in the manner of an English "Lit" instructor, a re-reading of the series would furnish a silencing answer. Most of our American "Left Wing" novelists, with the exceptions of Dos Passos, Armstrong, Rollins and a couple of others, so far have limited themselves to biographical or autobiographical techniques. Hicks demonstrated the rich ore embedded in different channels of various themes.

I happen to admire Comrade Herbst's *Pity Is Not Enough* more than Hicks does: not for its technical jugglery but for its kitchen-insight into feminine psychology. She, however, utterly distorts Hicks' illustrative suggestions on historical novels. Hicks ignores American themes, shrieks Comrade Herbst, repeating some of his suggestions but ignoring his mention of Shay's Rebellion.

Doubtless Hicks irritated these writers by undermining some pillars of their inherited bourgeois theories of fiction. For example, Dahlberg, a Proustian who has become a revolutionary, apparently is still in a transitional period in his methods of approaching the problems of a revolutionary novelist and is not ready to revise completely his estimate of Proust. Herbst, whose *Pity Is Not Enogh* probably was suggested by a phase of *The Financier* only casually treated by Dreiser (the reactions of a financier's family to his rise and fall), is partially influenced by the same old-fashioned determinism by which Cowperwood's conduct is explained.

One weakness of Hicks' series was that the first and last articles (*The Future and Past as Themes* and *The Future of Proletarian Literature*) were written largely for readers while the others were directed to writers. Hicks, of course, realized The New Masses was stretching its editorial policy to print craft discussions of necessarily limited interest. Incidentally, the magazine should, I believe, present book criticisms as warm, partisan reviews for readers instead of workshop autopsies for writers. Although the books of "our crowd" should be subjected to honest, general appraisals, they could be given more space than in the past. For such causes, we can spare many of the columns devoted to exposes of bourgeois bilge. The very names of many authors reviewed at length smell enough before the vivisections.

Another weakness was that Hicks limited his examples almost exclusively to American and English novels. To discuss the 'collective novel" as well as Jules Romains and his disciple, Dos Passos, it is necessary to recall the mass scenes in Zola's *Germinal* and *La Débâcle*. Likewise behind *The Pit, Tono-Bungay* and *The Financier* stand Zola's *L'Argent* and Balzac's *César Birotteau*. What I want, you see, is to have Hicks develop his series into a book. Meanwhile I shall treasure his articles.

Walter Snow.

Too Big

To The New Masses:

If it is possible to issue The New Masses a little smaller, about an inch all around, do that. I nearly lost a job on account of The New Masses not being able to stick in my pocket after folding it four ways.

E. B.

And So They Were Married

To The New Masses:

One of the most revolting spectacles staged in recent years by members of our capitalist society is that accompanying the declaration of John Jacob Astor III and Ellen Tuck French of their intention to wed. The press has had a field day with its stories about the "management" of the "match," the "substitute" at the last minute and the drawing power of "attraction" with reporters crowding the town of Newport and coming on from the Millen trial.

The McCann-Guest affair, uniting two of our "oldest families" (one of which stemmed from the Five-and-Ten Woolworths) was pretty bad with its 60-foot palms transported from Florida, a Grecian Love Temple, and coverlet of fresh gardenias (an old family custom!) for the nuptial couch. But for complete unawareness of the miserable plight of millions of people dying of slow starvation, and sheer vulgar display of cold hard cash and its purchasing power the French-Astor affair has not been equalled in my time.

Pictures appear in various papers showing Miss French displaying the $50,000 bracelet and the $75,000 ring given her by the prospective groom, and in the background, we are assured, is a specially built very expensive Cadillac—also a present from the groom. At the same time there are stories of the workers' misery and the needs of the masses, and in the same paper which gives Miss French and her jewels so much space there appears a small item registering an appeal by Dr. Ernest Sutherland for $36,000 for summer trips for needy children which are "no longer just vacations but rather a continuation of necessary relief work for starving families." Thirty-six thousand dollars is asked as a minimum to care for 2,000 physically weakened mothers and children, and Miss French wears jewelry valued at $125,000. One hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars spent by a man who earned not one penny of it, whose contributions to society have been limited to his publicity value to the capitalist press.

K. V. K.

The Liberal Rev. of Duluth

To The New Masses:

Several weeks ago we called a conference in Duluth of all the Jewish organizations to discuss the formation of a United Front against Fascism. The B'nai Brith was represented and they did not approve of any form of mass action or protest, explaining that their National Committee has outlined their policy which is to work secretly and through Gentiles, to keep quiet, to urge the Gentiles to put in a good word for them and to take out of their children's Sunday School books the statement that Christ was killed by the Jews and to encourage such demonstrations of good will towards the Jews as the reading of a little poem about the Jews by Edwin Markham on the radio. Furthermore, they saw no need of any kind of an organization against Fascism locally, for was not everything quiet on the midwestern front?

The following day the Rev. L. L. Dunnington, Duluth's outstanding "liberal," a man who pays the Soviet Union a "sympathetic" visit every year, brought to his church an old classmate of his, a Professor Turner of Germany. We noticed in the audience of Duluth's wealthiest Gentiles about thirty or so B'Nai Brith Jews. Rev. Dunnington was "very happy indeed to present this objective Christian gentleman who has no axe to grind." And this objective Christian gentleman, in a manner so hypocritical and so insidious as to nauseate even Uriah Heep, proceeded to give the most subtle and dangerous piece of Nazi propaganda that ever came out of the mouth of a Nazi demagogue.

For this the gentle Reverend thanked him and asked for questions. Not one of those thirty Jews had a question to ask in spite of the fact that the whole speech was one mess of lies and they knew it. Not one Jew sprang up to challenge a single statement. We observed that some of them even applauded him politely. (A Jew must be a gentleman.) And we two Jews from the I.L.D. who sprang up and challenged the Christian gentleman's objectivity and called him the hypocrite and Nazi propagandist that he was were severely criticized in Jewish circles because being Jews we "made it harder for other Jews, by being conspicuous and discourteous."

The following week, as members of the I.L.D., we visited Rev. Dunnington and demanded to know why he who presents himself to this city as a liberal and a friend of Russia should have brought this Nazi to his church to spread Fascist propaganda. He denied that Turner was a Nazi and in the course of an argument during which he lost his own "objectivity" he made the following statement:

"Why, Turner withheld the facts out of his consideration to the Jews. If he had told on that pulpit about all the things that the Jews in Germany are doing there would be a pogrom in every city of the United States."

The committee was curious to know what terrible things the Jews in Germany are doing to warrant their present misery and he obligingly elaborated: "Why, 55 percent of the physicians in Germany are Jews. There was a milk shortage in Germany and milk was given out by prescription. And do you know that those Jewish children had milk while the Gentile children had none? Why, if my little kiddies had no milk and these Jewish children had milk, I'd be as bitter and resentful as the Nazis are." Whereupon we informed Duluth's outstanding liberal that by that very statement he shows himself to be in complete sympathy with Nazi propaganda, that if he were the hater of Fascism that he claims to be he would expose this Nazi effort to befuddle and confuse the real issues in Germany, approving by this example the efforts to make the Jews the goat for the evils of Germany's economic system and that we intend by every possible means to expose him to the working-class of Duluth so that he may no longer use his reputation as a liberal to mislead and confuse them.

Irene L. Paull.

An Error

To The New Masses:

From Gilfillan statement, July 3, p. 29: "I feel, as Mr. Kallett says, that "Marxists have never mastered the mechanics of American mass opinion."

Error somewhere; I didn't say this. Maybe Kallen?

Arthur Kallet.

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Books

An Arsenal of Facts

LABOR FACT BOOK II. Prepared by the Labor Research Association. International Publishers. $.95.

HERE is an arsenal of the most significant facts concerning the American and international scene. The worker, farmer, and student will find material that is of the utmost importance for a correct understanding of what is really happening. Unlike the average digest or summary, which gives isolated and unimportant data, the *Labor Fact Book* presents a connected series of facts, which disclose the truth about the vital problems that confront the American revolutionary movement.

The aim of this valuable handbook is to present concise and accurate "figures and reliable information about a wide variety of economic, social and political matters." It is designed primarily for use in connection with the working-class movement, and as such fulfills a real need for good reference material.

The second *Fact Book* is, on the whole, superior to the first volume. The information is more rounded; the subjects have been more carefully selected. It is important to point out that the second volume is no mere rewrite of the first, brought up to date. There are entirely new chapters and subjects, including recent developments of the crisis, Roosevelt's New Deal, the conditions of the workers and farmers since Roosevelt took office, the counter-attack of the workers against Roosevelt's hunger program in the form of the rising strike wave, the miserable condition of the Negro under the New Deal, Fascism in Europe, fascist groups and tendencies in the United States, the preparations by the capitalists for a new imperialist war, and the victorious march of the Soviet Union towards Socialism. Adding to the value of the new information is an appendix containing tables from the 1930 census figures on the size of the working-class, the number of working women, child workers, etc.; and a selected group of references for each chapter.

Since it is impossible within the limited space of a small handbook to cover all subjects exhaustively, the treatment is uneven, the authors selecting and emphasizing those topics that they "believe to be of greatest importance." Because of this difficulty the chapters on the Negro and on Fascism are not so adequate as the other chapters. But on the whole almost every topic is treated fully. A tremendous amount of invaluable information is packed together in a few pages, giving a comprehensive picture of the whole subject. Perhaps the best section of the handbook is the chapter that discusses the situation of the farmers. It is a model piece of research work presented in a clear and interesting manner.

Workers, farmers, and intellectuals should send in criticism and suggestions to the Labor Research Association so that the third *Labor Fact Book* will be of even more value to the workers and farmers in their struggles. A student with whom the reviewer talked complained that the language in many spots was too flowery. A worker pointed out that much of the material would be more useful if graphs and charts were used to illustrate its points. The reviewer notes a slight tendency to accept certain statements uncritically. The worst example of these few factual slips is the uncritical acceptance on page 88 of "a constructive program for decent housing" that was both from an economic and social viewpoint downright silly, and which hardly differs from the numerous plans suggested by bourgeois housing experts.

But none of these few and very minor faults detract from the great value of the book to all who want to know the truth, and to have facts available for use against the lies of capitalist experts. No one who wants to floor his professor, expose his boss, or give an agitational talk or lecture on any aspect of the crisis and capitalism and what it means to the working-class can afford to be without *Labor Fact Book II.*

DAVID RAMSEY.

An Assassin of Clay Pigeons

FIRST AND LAST, by Ring Lardner. Scribner's. $2.50.

Some of Ring Lardner's stories will live in the anthologies, for their deadly wit and precision. They are masterpieces in a minor technique, and remarkable, also, because produced by a mind that had worked on the conveyor belt of American journalism for so many years.

Ring Lardner had the gifts of a great satirist. But he never freed himself from the wage slavery of capitalist journalism. Hemmed in, stultified, and betrayed by its unwritten censorship, which all deny but which every editor and author must know if he wants to live, Lardner failed to develop a tenth of his unmistakable power.

The temper of his mind was not that of the professional entertainer. He was really a killer. He was a Dean Swift in the embryo, fully as sensitive to the ridiculous cruelty around him.

Gilbert Seldes has combed through American newspapers and magazines of the past twenty years and gathered the best fugitive pieces of the late satirist. The result, in a book, must come as a surprise to the most ardent Lardnerite. It is painfully thin and trivial. It is so because the editors of the Saturday Evening Post, College Humor, the New Yorker, the American Magazine, and Vanity Fair, all of these professional time-killers and mind-wasters, want nothing that criticizes a fundamental capitalist institution. They want nonsense and circuses. It is their function in the scheme. To distract his victims while a pickpocket is at work, his confederates clown their way through a sham battle. Editors may never examine their own rôle in the social scheme, and never consciously abet the great robbery named capitalism. But as instinctively as bees or hyenas, they know what they want. Ring Lardner gave it to them. Like any sweated miner or share-cropper, he was always making a living.

This book is about the best sort of thing that can be expected of that world. The super-gags follow each other with the monotony of a stamping machine. Having no mind, heart, or soul, they soon become boring. Ring Lardner could have written a modern *Alice in Wonderland* but did an Al Jolson instead. Even in the realm of pure nonsense, his work was frustrate.

Ring Lardner spoofs baseball, yacht races, the game of bridge, prize fights, the radio, the Dada school of art, and even a disarmament conference. Any anatomy of thought is lacking under the brilliant surface. At the disarmament conference he worries about his dress suit and says: "Last night President Harding and I attended *The Merry Widow* but not together."

He was a shrewd parodist, but here again he is superficial because of the trivial themes that are allowed him. A satirist who spends his time knocking over clay pigeons in a shooting gallery may become a fine marksman, but he hasn't proved himself until he has gone after big game. In our time, the monstrosities of capitalism are the true big game. Perhaps this is the reason America has thousands of gangsters, but not one satirist. It takes courage to hunt in this jungle.

MICHAEL GOLD.

Liberals and Fascists

WAR UNLESS—, by Sisley Huddleston. Lippincott. $2.

CAN WE LIMIT WAR? by Hoffman Nickerson. Stokes. $2.75.

These two books—one liberal, the other fascist in rationale—are perfectly complementary. In the first an experienced foreign correspondent, alarmed by the "imminent danger of war," undertakes "to indicate what should be done," protesting that the numberless diplomatic conferences since Versailles, the League's feeble gestures, "defensive" alliances and counter-alliances, the disarmament extravaganza, even the general peace pacts ("Peace has become an instrument of national policy"), have done nothing but sharpen issues of conflict and hasten the present crisis.

If peace was the goal, such capitalistic enterprise is manifestly bankrupt, with every nation arming frenziedly to unprecedented totals. Yet Mr. Huddleston can insist repeatedly and cite evidence that there is not, "at least among

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the masses, . . . the smallest desire for war." But to what purpose does he note this basic fact? To urge the masses in every country to unite solidly to fight for their very lives? To urge them to join hands across artificial boundaries and gather strength for final concerted attack upon the predatory few now so busily engaged in inciting them once again to mutual slaughter? No! The masses are to be saved diplomatically—by an exchange of notes, etc., for your true liberal is always willing to try—well, if not anything—at least the same thing, not once but ten thousand times. This is what he knows as the experimental "scientific" approach. This is what he knows as "keeping an open mind"—so open, in fact, that it retains nothing but a pious hope that he will some day stumble upon some nice verbal formula of potent magic that will at once set everything in the world to rights and yet leave everything just as it is.

Mr. Huddleston's own solution of this fascinating problem includes an Anglo-American alliance, a four-power pact along Mussolinian lines to "pacify" Europe (no doubt as Austria has been) and finally, another Versailles, a "second Peace Conference, . . . to revise the treaties" at the expense of smaller and weaker (?) nations by means of "compensation"! "Russia can be set aside for later negotiations," he adds glibly, perhaps in hope of another Brest-Litovsk (cf. Rosenberg and Hugenburg). If this seems an unwarranted assumption, what of the singular fact that in the Far East all is presumably peace and prosperity (cf. the Japanese War Office), for our "open-minded" Liberal makes no slightest mention of any menace there! Certainly, all things considered, especially the rising temper of the exploited masses everywhere, there will infallibly be war unless—!

Dropping every last pretense and romantic illusion raised by liberal democracy, trying desperately to spread a cloak of realism over its own more romantic puerilities, *Can We Limit War?* almost defies rational analysis. Scorning all science but the military, reeking of medievalism and Christian apologetics, savagely anti-semitic and anti-communist, flaunting a violent contempt of the masses generally, it reflects all of the more vulgar and archaic prejudices of that school of bowdlerized classicism which so impudently styles itself the newer humanism, one certain mark of arrested cultural development.

War, runs this Christian-fascist hymn, is "inevitable"—an integral part of the "divine" (predatory, exploitative, hierarchic) order of things. Furthermore, war sheerly as war is, if not always a positive "good," at least a blessing in disguise—provided hostilities are not excessively prolonged. The trick is apparently to wage war moderately, neo-humanistically, so as not too seriously to strain the "eternal" order and have it go to smash in revolution. There exist economic, political and moral limitations upon the amount of cannon-fodder, etc., which our masters can safely waste in any one war. There arises therefore an occasional need of peace as a breathing and breeding spell in which to prepare for the next war.

In his analysis of this country's "preparedness" needs, Mr. Nickerson declares as a military expert that since the danger of invasion is wholly illusory and as the army's primary job is emergency police work "in repressing insurrection, . . . a relatively small force, able to strike hard and quickly, is what is wanted." For our imperial needs he likewise recommends a small professional force as against a larger "democratic" conscript army. Why? Ostensibly to minimize bloodshed, but really for other reasons. Admitting as "conceivable" a second military adventure abroad, he remarks that it is "not merely a question of wars between national states; there has arisen in Russia a government possessed by the new and intense religion known as Communism, . . . and should non-Communist elements abroad appeal to us for help, we might see fit to join in an anti-Communist Crusade." Certainly in such an event a large army conscripted from among the masses might prove a disconcertingly double-edged weapon.

This ill-concealed fear of arming the masses inspires the author's arrant nonsense about military frightfulness playing no part whatever in the next war. He would have us believe against all common sense and practically unanimous expert opinion that the war now brewing, far from being unimaginably horrible, will be one of the nicest we have had for centuries, and we should therefore not worry our heads about it. He would persuade us, the mealy-mouthed blatherskite, that the issue will be settled for us by a few chosen champions—airmen and tankmen—who will chivalrously fight it out in almost single-handed combat to our infinite delight. "War, should it lose the overwhelming tragedy and horror of our mass massacres, need not lose the glamour that has never failed the man-at-arms. . . . The tankman is the spiritual descendant of the Companions of Alexander, . . . he is the Byzantine horse-archer, victoriously stinging back from eastern Europe the barbarian hordes of a thousand years, or the steel-clad medieval knight, gleefully spurring his great charger into no matter how vast a jacquerie of revolted peasants." Small wonder they were "revolted"!

Extremely class-conscious and resolved to fight to the death to preserve his privileged status, sensing acutely the hopelessness of traditional capitalism with its wild internecine warfare, Mr. Nickerson seriously proposes as a solution a reunited Christendom, no less—but along strictly nationalistic lines, of course, for "we instinctively feel that the average internationalist is something of a scoundrel." The feasibility of this scheme arouses doubts even in Mr. Nickerson himself, who proceeds to formulate one possible objection thus: "European man is passing out of his Christian phase; no longer erect and observing the sky, he crouches over a test-tube in a laboratory, applying what is left of his intellect to the mere cataloguing of physical sequences, and waiting for some chance mob of proletarian robots led by an atheist Jew boiling with ancestral hatred of Christian things, to come and knock him on the head."

But all is not irretrievably lost. There is yet time to reach Rome and the Pope's toe. "We and our sons may yet restore a Christian order, . . . and the sword that shall establish our peace will have its blade straight and in the form of a cross." Up with your nighties and silver shirts and hurrah for the Ku Klux Klan!—or rather, the Knights of Columbus!

And the moral is—hew to the line, boys, and let the gyps fall where they may.

G. F. WILLISON.

The Art of Selection

TO THE VANQUISHED, by I. A. R. Wylie. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. $2.50.

BLACK EXCHANGE, by Patrick Kirwan. The Vanguard Press. $2.

If you know how to select and "interpret" your material, there is no limit to the magic you can perform. You can turn even Nazi Germany into an argument against proletarian revolution. True, the result may bear no resemblance to the reality, but with the help of a little blood and thunder plus a few pious, pseudo-philosophical remarks it should get by the average reader. Working-class organizations such as the Communist and Social Democratic parties and the labor unions do not enter into Miss Wylie's portrait of Germany during Hitler's rise and accession to power. Nor do Junkers and rich industrial capitalists. Now take what is left, juggle it a bit, and you get what the publisher's blurb calls "a novel through whose heroic pages sound the drums of history." It is the fantastic history of a struggle between peaceful, democratic, middle-class elements of the Nazi party which is treated as an autonomous (lumpen) proletarian revolt! So, naturally enough, the misery and barbarism of Hitler Germany prove only the futility and horror of revolution, and we are not surprised at the end of the book to find Miss Wylie's disillusioned brownshirt hero coming to the sadder-and-wiser conclusion that rather than rebel against horrible social conditions it is "better to be a thief and to starve and rot in degradation,—better for a whole people to go unde and be forgotten."

Absurd as is the "history" presented in *To the Vanquished* is a clever piece of popu fiction. It was serialized in the Saturday ning Post, and its "heroic pages" do work as dutifully as La Guardia's heroic Indeed we cannot help feeling that the jacket's gurgling remark about anoth Miss Wylie's works applies especially v this one: "If you were very rich and go to a great novelist and have him wr a story that had everything in it yo wanted a story to contain, this is the novel you'd ask for."

Patrick Kirwan's first published artistically on a much higher plane.

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is Berlin during the wild days of the inflation but Kirwan has apparently chosen this background not in order to portray the social forces involved and the chaotic conditions accompanying the fall of the mark, but because he finds in this crazy world where wages melt before you can spend them and manipulators win and lose fortunes over night, a plausible setting for a group of socially uprooted characters whose adventures give him an opportunity to make all sorts of observations concerning psychological types, national characteristics, politics, and what not, as well as to exercise that peculiar humor which we have come to expect from Irish writers. The chief character, an Irish refugee, is, alas, another addition to the long line of modern Hamlets, given to solitary drunkenness, nervous breakdowns, ironical reflections about life and love, and dark remarks that leave his less sophisticated and less introverted listeners mystified and staring in open-mouthed awe, and leave the reader—just a bit weary.

LAWRENCE GILBERT.

With Leftward Glances

ROCK AND SHELL, by John Wheelwright. Bruce Humphries. $2.50.

Fine poetry which is not obviously propagandist has confused the critics again and again. In other arts the quarrel is evident (compare the reception of Gellert's decorations for *Capital)*, but in a less complex form. Poets have been regarded as a backward minority and left, for the most part, to fight among themselves. So that, when a book like John Wheelwright's *Rock and Shell* appears, the flaws in criticism of poetry become emphasized. Here is a book of fine poetry that must have an uneasy reception.

Rock and Shell is on the surface contradictory. Employing the technical devices of classic verse freely and impudently, Wheelwright is master enough of form to let us pass to his contradictions of principle without quibbling about style. Complicated, varied, glinting from image to image, his ideas travel at high speed. Sometimes they cover themselves with the formulas of mysticism, often they pause in religion. But intermittently an urgent line or phrase hints his direction. He says:

> Our blood gives voice to earth and shell
> they speak but in refracted sounds.
> The silence of the dead resounds,
> but what they say we cannot tell.
> Only echoes of what they taught
> are heard by living ears.
> The tongue tells what it hears
> and drowns the silence which the dead
> besought.

His Salvation Army girl stood on the Cathedral steps, thinking of the City of God.

> "I am a child of peace" she said.

And exhorted the bread-line and flop-house crowds to smash the abomination of windows and carved doors:

> "—Your damage to the Devil's property
> would not count up to more than you have paid
> begging and stealing, to maintain the right
> of asking to be kept alive."

In *Gestures to the Dead,* he writes:

> Booth evaded the fame he sought, by speaking
> justly of Lincoln, *sic semper tyrannis.*
> It was banal enough to be immortal.
> You, Judas, sacrificed for our Messiah.
> You, Brutus, needful for our Caesar cult.
> Yours is the signal deed of all our history
> for pure liberty, for freedom, not reform.
> Some men fight Fate with its own fatal weapons,
> and ever believe they kill themselves for the life
> of the thing they kill, as Lincoln did for the
> Union.

You will see at a glance at *Rock and Shell* that I have deliberately seized upon the obvious passages. Very little of the book uses this tone. But it outlines the development of a poet passing from religious preoccupation to activity in the revolutionary movement. A comparison of *Gestures to the Dead,* for example, with Horace Gregory's *New York, Cassandra* will throw in relief Wheelwright's eccentric position and saturation with references, as well as his technical limitations. But, within the boundaries he has set himself, he is alone. His work cannot be dismissed as confused or confusing. Too many poets whose work might be exhibited as vital influences have been too faintly praised. Their poems may not be accessible to a large number of readers who must be reached, but they are writing the fine Left poetry of our time. Such writers are laying a base of literary activity and revolutionary creation which must be realized as one of the important fronts of the growing cultural movement.

MURIEL RUKEYSER.

Rambling Reporter

NINE ETCHED FROM LIFE, by Emil Ludwig. Robert McBride and Co. $3.

Emil Ludwig is noted both as journalist and as biographer, but he is better as journalist. His *Nine Etched from Life,* containing biographical personality-portraits of contemporary statesmen, all of whom the author has talked with at least once face to face, is far from being a great book, but it is a useful book for the present. It gives busy people some current historical data; it quotes at length from the conversations and writings of its subjects, revealing more of their personalities than Ludwig, with his limited social understanding, really grasped.

The first thing the reader is likely to notice in surveying the book is the classification of subjects under two heads: "Servants of the People" and "Rulers of the People." Of the servants in this list, there are five: Nansen of Norway, Masaryk of Czecho-Slovakia, Briand, Rathenau, and Motta of Switzerland. Of the rulers, there are Lloyd George, Venizelos of Greece, Mussolini, and Stalin. In his foreword the author apologetically remarks that "the distinction between Autocrat and Democrat is no longer very clear," and adds that the term "Rulers of the People" is "only a relative designation," since two of them—the Britisher and the Greek—were chosen "because they alone possessed the necessary ruling qualities." Thus, before the reader can even begin the essays proper, he is propagandized against the Soviet Union: he is given the idea that Stalin is a ruler, and that Mussolini and Stalin are alike not only in being rulers but in being self-imposed rulers.

Along with the atmosphere, sentiment, and insinuated propaganda, the author reveals his own outmoded philosophical and mystical ideas. In Nansen he perceives the "singular characteristics" of the "Nordic hunter," "the Nordic nature of the man," and so on. He insists that Masaryk's life was "in reality the work of Providence" and that we must acknowledge "that unseen agency which directed this man's life from the start," for "it is only the eye of God that sees the whole picture beforehand and probably has planned it."

The stories of Nansen and of Rathenau are particularly interesting, both because of the ability and real integrity of each, and curious bits of information which narration of their careers brings forth. Nansen, for example, in testifying before the League of Nations delegates on the famine in Soviet Russia in 1921. —Ludwig quotes the official report—"proved that a relief train which was said to have been sent by Hoover and plundered by Soviet soldiers never existed at all." And Rathenau, Jewish banker, industrialist, and social theorizer, sketched "a plan of important reforms which would render the economic system more productive as a whole," and this plan, drawn up by a Jew, which involved the establishment of syndicates, became the Fascist pattern: "Such syndicates, or corporations," Ludwig observes, "are today the nerve centers of the Fascist organization in Rome and are just now being copied in Berlin."

THE DEATH SHIP
THE STORY OF AN AMERICAN SAILOR
BY B. TRAVEN
Black cloth stamped in gold, 372 pages, $2.50 at all bookshops.
ALFRED · A · KNOPF 730 Fifth Ave., New York

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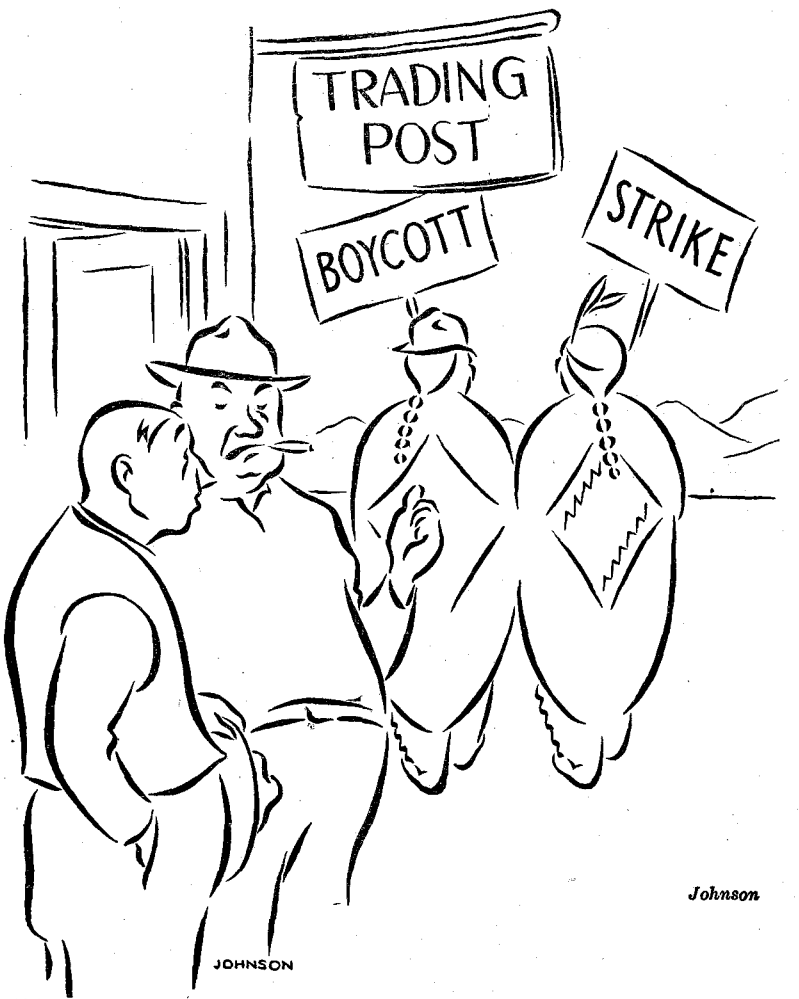

"THEY'RE NOT EVEN CITIZENS."

The essays on Mussolini and Stalin, however, best illustrate Ludwig's literary method, his reportorial carefulness, and his social bias. He says that if Mussolini "sought power it was not for his own sake but rather that he might help in building up this new order after which he yearned." Still further, "Mussolini is Latin through and through." He has "a personality born to command," and "the goal he had in view was by no means a safe or an easy one." Ludwig admires Mussolini's "perfect naturalness and absence of pose." Finally, "Mussolini displayed a good deal of forbearance which proved him in the circumstances to have the qualities of a statesman." No reference in the entire Mussolini essay to the castor oil methods, the beatings of workmen, the terroristic repression, the killings! In one connection only—a mention that Matteotti's murder had "seriously damaged Mussolini's prestige"—is any factual datum directly condemnatory of Mussolini allowed to alter the sentimental picture.

The essay on Stalin begins with a gratuitous slander about the evil of legend-making "when the subject of the legend is himself an active party to its promulgation." The author asserts that there is an "attempt made by writers and even photographers to give a false impression to the Russian dictator, Stalin," the implication being that they try to idealize him But after his poisoned beginning, the article becomes genuinely interesting. Stalin's answers to Ludwig's questions, faithfully reported (as I said, Ludwig *is* a good journalist), go far toward destroying the effect of the biographer's blundering analysis. "I hold that men make history," Ludwig told Stalin. "You are mistaken," Stalin replied. "Read that part of Marx where he speaks of the poverty of philosophy . . . There . . . you will find that men make history. But not in the way that your fancy suggests." . . . It is for such incidental reporting that posterity will be grateful.

OAKLEY JOHNSON.

Brief Reviews

BRAINS BEHIND BARBED WIRE, A Collective Report, translated with notes by Herbert Klein. Universum-Buecheri, 38 Union Square, New York. 15c.

The Association of Proletarian Revolutionary Writers of Germany has prepared this report on the fate of a considerable group of writers, scientists, and others in Nazi Germany. Carl von Ossietski, the journalist, is today a broken man in a concentration camp. No one knows what has happened to Willie Bredel. Frank Braun was "found dead in his cell." Klaus Neukrantz is in jail. Such humanitarians as Erich Muehsam and Kurt Hiller are brutally tortured. Hermann Duncker, leading economist, is in solitary confinement. Theodore Lessing, idealist philosopher, was shot. So the record goes. The pamphlet closes with an appeal: "Write—wherever a piece of printable paper is at your disposal! Speak—whenever you possess for a moment the attention of people!" This pamphlet is not only a call to battle; it is ammunition for the fight.

A LETTER TO AMERICAN WORKERS, by V. I. Lenin. International Publishers. 5c.

In this letter, dated August 20, 1918, Lenin describes the policies and methods of the October Revolution. Appealing directly to the revolutionary tradition of the American proletariat, he asks for understanding and support. In an excellent introduction Alexander Trachtenberg describes the historical background of the letter, of which this is the first complete and accurate translation. The letter is not only an historical document of the first importance but also a striking example of Lenin's power of analysis and of his faith in world revolution.

WATERFRONT, by John Brophy. The Macmillan Co. $2.

A story describing the battle for bread and happiness of a small Liverpool family. The two daughters work in a large department store. One is engaged to an unemployed marine engineer, the other is seduced by a flashy transient. The father returns, after fourteen years of silence and desertion, and commits a murder, the ignominy of which is accepted with the customary stoicism. The fact that Nora's engineer gets a job and marries her provides the questionably happy ending. The book, generally free from pretense or melodrama, is strongest when it treats of the brow-beaten, poverty-stricken daily routine of the girls; its weaknesses arise from its circumscribed orbit and point of view. The characterizations are exceptionally good.

DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM, by V. Adoratsky. International Publishers. 50c.

The director of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute in Moscow presents in this brief book a brilliant introduction to the theories of Marxism-Leninism. "Without a revolutionary theory," said Lenin, "there can be no revolutionary movement." But revolutionary theory is not easy to master. Workers naturally have difficulty in finding time for the study of theory. Intellectuals — and often workers, too, for that matter—approach the subject with their minds full of the odds and ends of bourgeois philosophies. Adoratsky, by clearly presenting the fundamental principles evolved by Marx, Engels, and Lenin, not only gives the reader an elementary understanding of dialectical materialism but also shows him how to continue his study. The book does not pretend, of course, to discuss the subject comprehensively or to defend Marxism in detail, but it does give a remarkably clear idea of what dialectical materialism is and why it is so important to the revolutionary proletariat. It is a book that every Communist ought to read.

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Portrait of a Sap

ROBERT FORSYTHE

EVERY critic is entitled to a blind spot and mine happens to be Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage.* I went so far on one accasion as to call it the most overrated of all novels, receiving abusive correspondence from old friends I hadn't heard from since the sixth grade. The fact that the book is a good book and was neglected during its youth now makes it a monumental volume. You can always tell members of the Maugham cult by the manner in which mention of the book is received. They tighten the lips and drop the eyes and move the head slowly to one side, as if to indicate that they can't trust themselves to say how much they love that work of art. You never see them tighten the lips and drop the eyes when you mention Tolstoy's *War and Peace* or *Vanity Fair* or *The Brothers Karamazov.* You may, however, see it with the Herman Melville cult or the Thomas Mann cult. They are both great writers but their worshipers want you to understand that in some occult and abstruse fashion they have managed to bring themselves in such communion with the masters that no other could possibly share it. If I seem to exaggerate, I would point to the fact that the James Joyce cult and the Marcel Proust cult are equally powerful but they lack this special Swedenborgian touch. The readers of *Ulysses* even at their most rhapsodic have never given the impression that they were taking part in a ceremony of the Mystic Shrine. I am confident that when *Of Human Bondage* has become so well known that its reverent followers can no longer cherish the thought that they are alone in touch with infinity it will resume its place among the good, but not miraculous, novels of our time.

I am prompted to these thoughts by the film version of the book which was on view at Radio City Music Hall in an adaptation by Lester Cohen. Hollywood is at its combustible best when it brings reverence and care to its subjects and *Of Human Bondage* suffers from the same unconscious malice which revealed *Little Man, What Now* in all its nakedness. With the exception of the sugar icing on the end, Mr. Cohen has clung to the spirit of the book not only with veneration but with taste. The production by John Cromwell for R.K.O. is equally deferential and it is difficult to see how any more could have been done for it. I will be the first to admit that the skeleton structure of the film cannot hope to give the finely textured impression of the book but it is equally plain, to my stupid mind at least, that the book as well as the film is hamstrung by the fact that the hero is undeniably an awful fool.

We find Philip Carey as an art student in Paris. He is not only a bad painter but he is afflicted with a club foot which makes him almost too sensitive for human company. He next turns up as a medical student in London, still conscious of his affliction but eager for the love and admiration of the gentler sex. He finds nothing better to do with his own warm affection than to waste it on a cheap cockney waitress, who scorns him from the beginning. Rather than marry him she prefers the extra mural society of a Teutonic gentleman who looks much like the late Captain Ernst Roehm. He finds a very nice girl who is crazy about him but chucks her when the waitress returns burdened by the infant of her hefty seducer. She repays him for this noble gesture by running off with his best friend. When he takes her back she repays him again by scourging him with insults and finally burning the bonds on which he had hoped to finish his medical career. In the meantime, he has met the lovely daughter of an elderly and very hearty old gentleman, who has shown him that she fears neither his club foot nor his precarious existence. But when the waitress, now a street walker and looking like somebody in Hollywood who has used almost $9 worth of black stuff to paint her eyelids into a very semblance of degradation and wickedness, comes back into his life—popping out and in like somebody on a commuter's ticket—he is right there being a martyr. This, I presume, is love; a special masochistic form of love, but love. But I have a theory about this also. I am very much of the opinion that exceptionalism is not a sound base for art. I can best illustrate what I mean by referring to the visitors to New Mexico who immediately leap to a typewriter at first knowledge of the Penitentes. What they invariably miss are the thousand fascinating plots around the conflict between the Spanish and the Goths and Huns from Iowa and Texas. Philip Carey's creator has every right to expect my sympathy for his hero but I am certainly entitled to protect myself when he turns out to be a ninny. Instead of being the victim of the complexes arising from his affliction, I know now that he was a hopeless sentimentalist. And a sentimentalist is one who will ruin two good people rather than offend one worthless bum.

Having said this, I can tell you that the picture, aside from Mr. Maugham, is very good. The direction is very good; Leslie Howard as Philip Carey is very good; Bette Davis as the waitress (accent and all) is very good; Kay Johnson and Frances Dee are very good; and Reginald Owen as the father of the latter is exceptionally good. If you think that I am given to inventing the comments of the spectators at the Music Hall, I may remind you that Richard Watts, Jr., in the Herald Tribune reported the remark of a young lady to her mother. "But he's such a silly!" cried the young lady of Mr. Philip Carey.

This confirms a suspicion that I have been cherishing for some time: the paying guests are not so dumb.

Between Ourselves

PAUL NOVICK is associate editor of the Freiheit. The editor, Moissaye Olgin is now in the Soviet Union. Before he left we commissioned him to write a series of articles for us on the International Writers' Congress and other subjects. We expect to begin presenting these articles by Olgin shortly.

A comprehensive article on the situation in Milwaukee, where one of the major strike struggles of the year has taken place under a Socialist administration, will be published next week. It is by Paul Romaine, of the John Reed Club of Milwaukee. The club, incidentally, was recently instrumental, by organizing mass protest, in preventing the sending of an official junket to Hitler Germany. The Milwaukee State Teachers' College administration had planned to send its band over, at public expense, when the John Reed Club nipped the scheme in the bud.

A first hand report on the fate of culture under a Fascist regime will be given in an article, *Blackshirt Art Festival,* by an Italian writer.

Ben Field has writen a short story, *Light,* which we will publish in an early issue. Field, who has specialized in the farm situation, is now on his way to the Soviet Union for a six-months' stay, much of which will be spent on a great cooperative farm.

The business office requests us to caution readers remitting money to THE NEW MASSES to do so only by check, postal or express money orders. Losses of cash sent through the mails have been heavy and there seems to be no way of putting a stop to these losses unless the readers cooperate by exercising care in sending remittances.

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